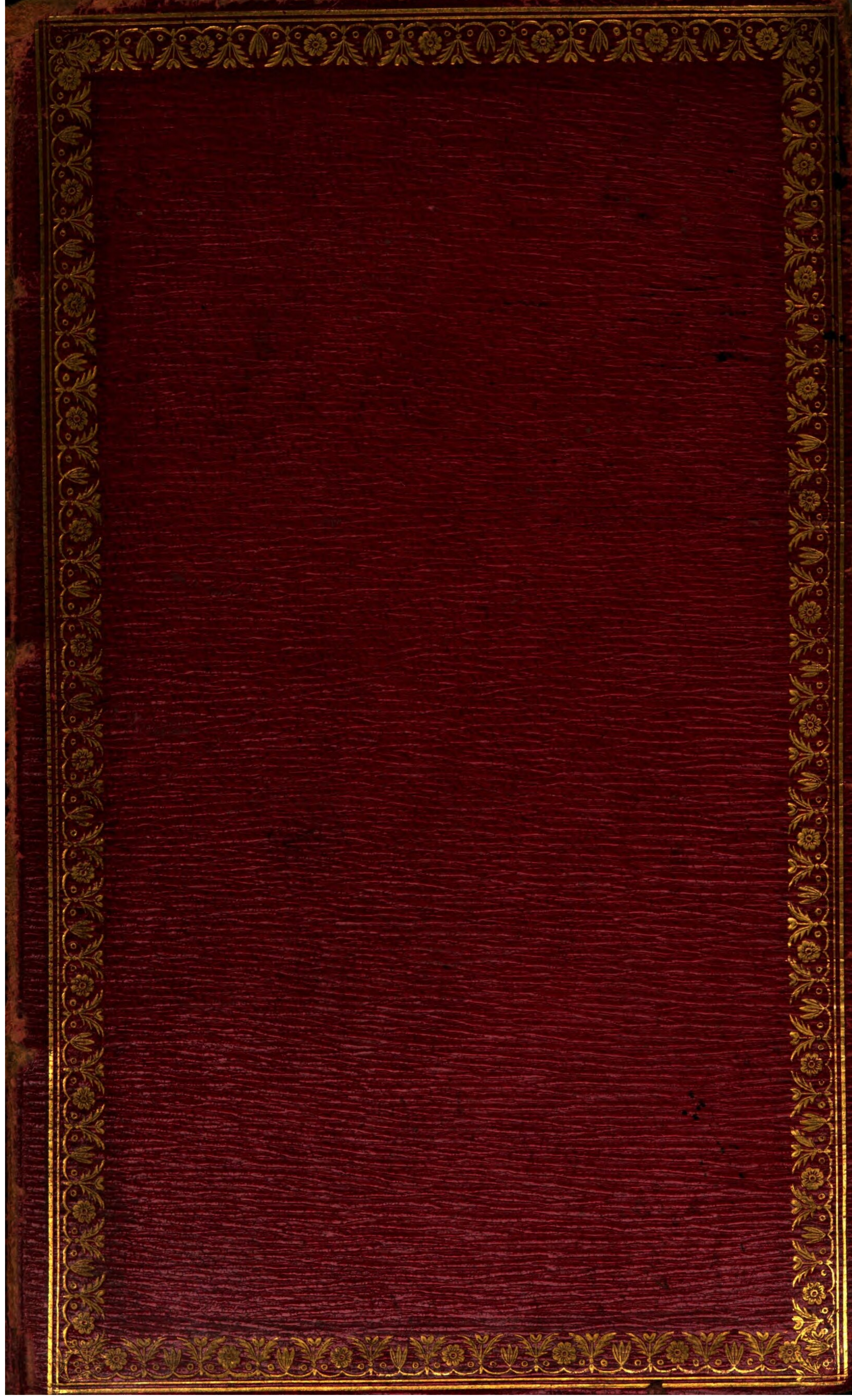




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WORKS

NIGHT BOX, LIND BIRD

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WORKS

SIR JOHN BURNES

BY THE VOLUME

THE

LONDON

IN THE MUSEUM

1810

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WORKS

OF THE

RIGHT HON. LORD BYRON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1815.

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1816

THE GIAOUR,

A FRAGMENT OF

A TURKISH TALE.

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

AS A SLIGHT BUT MOST SINCERE TOKEN
OF
BY LORD BYRON.

“ One fatal remembrance—one sorrow that throws
“ It's bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes—
“ To which Life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
“ For which joy hath no balm—and affliction no sting.”

MOORE.

THE NINTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed by Thomas Davison, Whitefriars,

FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

TO

SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

AS A SLIGHT BUT MOST SINCERE TOKEN

OF ADMIRATION OF HIS GENIUS;

RESPECT FOR HIS CHARACTER,

AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS FRIENDSHIP;

THIS PRODUCTION IS INSCRIBED BY

HIS OBLIGED AND AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,

BYRON.

TO
SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

AS A BELIEF IN HIS MOST SINCERE TOILETS

OF ADMIRATION OF HIS GENIUS

RESPECT FOR HIS CHARACTER

AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS FRIENDSHIP

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BYRON

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE tale which these disjointed fragments present, is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the “olden time;” or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprize. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Mainotes, on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprize, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the faithful.

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THE GIAOUR,

A FRAGMENT OF A TURKISH TALE.

No breath of air to break the wave
That rolls below the Athenian's grave,
That tomb¹ which, gleaming o'er the cliff,
First greets the homeward-veering skiff,
High o'er the land he saved in vain—
When shall such hero live again?

* * * * *

Fair clime! where every season smiles
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
Which seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There mildly dimpling—Ocean's cheek
Reflects the tints of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the eastern wave;

And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue chrystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air,
That wakes and wafts the odours there! 20
For there—the Rose o'er crag or vale,
Sultana of the Nightingale,²
 The maid for whom his melody—
 His thousand songs are heard on high,
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale; 25
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,
Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,
Far from the winters of the west
By every breeze and season blest,
Returns the sweets by nature given 30
In softest incense back to heaven;
And grateful yields that smiling sky
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
And many a summer flower is there,
And many a shade that love might share, 35
And many a grotto, meant for rest,
That holds the pirate for a guest;

Whose bark in sheltering cove below
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
Till the gay mariner's guitar³ 40
Is heard, and seen the evening star ;
Then stealing with the muffled oar,
Far shaded by the rocky shore,
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
And turn to groans his roundelay. 45
Strange—that where Nature lov'd to trace,
As if for Gods, a dwelling-place,
And every charm and grace hath mixed
Within the paradise she fixed—
There man, enamour'd of distress, 50
Should mar it into wilderness,
And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
That tasks not one laborious hour ;
Nor claims the culture of his hand
To bloom along the fairy land, 55
But springs as to preclude his care,
And sweetly woos him—but to spare !
Strange—that where all is peace beside
There passion riots in her pride,

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And sweetly woos him—but to spare !
Strange—that where all is peace beside
There passion riots in her pride,

And lust and rapine wildly reign, 60
 To darken o'er the fair domain.
 It is as though the fiends prevail'd
 Against the seraphs they assail'd,
 And fixed, on heavenly thrones, should dwell
 The freed inheritors of hell— 65
 So soft the scene, so form'd for joy,
 So curst the tyrants that destroy!

He who hath bent him o'er the dead,
 Ere the first day of death is fled;
 The first dark day of nothingness, 70
 The last of danger and distress;
 (Before Decay's effacing fingers
 Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,
 And mark'd the mild angelic air—
 The rapture of repose that's there— 75
 The fixed yet tender traits that streak
 The languor of the placid cheek,
 And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
 That fires not—wins not—weeps not—now—
 And but for that chill changeless brow, 80
 Where cold Obstruction's apathy⁴

Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon—
Yes—but for these and these alone, 85
Some moments—aye—one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power,
So fair—so calm—so softly seal'd
The first—last look—by death reveal'd!⁵
Such is the aspect of this shore— 90
'Tis Greece—but living Greece no more!
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start—for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath; 95
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb—
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of Feeling past away! 100
Spark of that flame—perchance of heavenly birth—
Which gleams—but warms no more its cherish'd earth!

Clime of the unforgotten brave!—
Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
Was Freedom's home or Glory's grave— 105
Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
That this is all remains of thee?
Approach thou craven crouching slave—
Say, is not this Thermopylæ?
These waters blue that round you lave 110
Oh servile offspring of the free—
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
These scenes—their story not unknown—
Arise, and make again your own; 115
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires,
And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear,
That Tyranny shall quake to hear, 120
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too will rather die than shame;
For Freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeathed by bleeding Sire to Son,
Though baffled oft is ever won. 125

Bear witness, Greece, thy living page,
Attest it many a deathless age!
While kings in dusty darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,
Thy heroes—though the general doom 130
Hath swept the column from their tomb,
A mightier monument command,
The mountains of their native land!
There points thy Muse to stranger's eye,
The graves of those that cannot die! 135
'Twere long to tell, and sad to trace,
Each step from splendour to disgrace,
Enough—no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell,
Yes! Self-abasement pav'd the way 140
To villain-bonds and despot-sway.

What can he tell who treads thy shore?
No legend of thine olden time,
No theme on which the muse might soar,
High as thine own in days of yore, 145
When man was worthy of thy clime.

The hearts within thy valleys bred,
 The fiery souls that might have led
 Thy sons to deeds sublime;
 Now crawl from cradle to the grave, 150
 Slaves—nay the bondsmen of a slave,⁶
 And callous, save to crime;
 Stain'd with each evil that pollutes
 Mankind, where least above the brutes;
 Without even savage virtue blest, 155
 Without one free or valiant breast.
 Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
 Proverbial wiles, and ancient craft,
 In this the subtle Greek is found,
 For this, and this alone, renown'd. 160
 In vain might Liberty invoke
 The spirit to its bondage broke,
 Or raise the neck that courts the yoke:
 No more her sorrows I bewail,
 Yet this will be a mournful tale, 165
 And they who listen may believe,
 Who heard it first had cause to grieve.

* * * * *

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
 The shadows of the rocks advancing,
 Start on the fisher's eye-like boat 170
 Of island-pirate or Mainote;
 And fearful for his light caique
 He shuns the near but doubtful creek,
 Though worn and weary with his toil,
 And cumber'd with his scaly spoil, 175
 Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
 Till Port Leone's safer shore
 Receives him by the lovely light
 That best becomes an Eastern night.

* * * * *

Who thundering comes on blackest steed? 180
 With slacken'd bit and hoof of speed,
 Beneath the clattering iron's sound
 The cavern'd echoes wake around
 In lash for lash, and bound for bound;
 The foam that streaks the courser's side, 185
 Seems gather'd from the ocean-tide:
 Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
 There's none within his rider's breast,

And though to-morrow's tempest lower,
'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour! 7 190

I know thee not, I loathe thy race,
But in thy lineaments I trace
What time shall strengthen, not efface;
Though young and pale, that sallow front
Is scath'd by fiery passion's brunt, 195
Though bent on earth thine evil eye
As meteor like thou glidest by,
Right well I view, and deem thee one
Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

On—on he hastened—and he drew 200
My gaze of wonder as he flew:
Though like a demon of the night
He passed and vanished from my sight;
His aspect and his air impressed
A troubled memory on my breast; 205
And long upon my startled ear
Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear.
He spurs his steed—he nears the steep,
That jutting shadows o'er the deep—

He winds around—he hurries by— 210
The rock relieves him from mine eye—
For well I ween unwelcome he
Whose glance is fixed on those that flee;
And not a star but shines too bright
On him who takes such timeless flight. 215
He wound along—but ere he passed
One glance he snatched—as if his last—
A moment checked his wheeling steed—
A moment breathed him from his speed—
A moment on his stirrup stood— 220
Why looks he o'er the olive wood?—
The crescent glimmers on the hill,
The Mosque's high lamps are quivering still;
Though too remote for sound to wake
In echoes of the far tophaike,^s 225
The flashes of each joyous peal
Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal.
To-night—set Rhamazani's sun—
To-night—the Bairam feast's begun—
To-night—but who and what art thou 230
Of foreign garb and fearful brow?

And what are these to thine or thee,
That thou should'st either pause or flee?
He stood—some dread was on his face—
Soon Hatred settled in its place— 235
It rose not with the reddening flush
Of transient Anger's darkening blush,
But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom.
His brow was bent—his eye was glazed— 240
He raised his arm, and fiercely raised;
And sternly shook his hand on high,
As doubting to return or fly;—
Impatient of his flight delayed
Here loud his raven charger neighed— 245
Down glanced that hand, and grasped his blade—
That sound had burst his waking dream,
As Slumber starts at owlet's scream.—
The spur hath lanced his courser's sides—
Away—away—for life he rides— 250
Swift as the hurled on high jerreed,⁹
Springs to the touch his startled steed,

The rock is doubled—and the shore
Shakes with the clattering tramp no more—
The crag is won—no more is seen 255
His Christian crest and haughty mien.—
'Twas but an instant—he, restrained
That fiery barb so sternly reined—
'Twas but a moment that he stood,
Then sped as if by death pursued; 260
But in that instant, o'er his soul
Winters of Memory seemed to roll;
And gather in that drop of time
A life of pain, an age of crime.
O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears, 265
Such moment pours the grief of years—
What felt *he* then—at once oppress
By all that most distracts the breast?
That pause—which pondered o'er his fate,
Oh, who its dreary length shall date! 270
Though in Time's record nearly nought,
It was Eternity to Thought!
For infinite as boundless space
The thought that Conscience must embrace,

Which in itself can comprehend 275

Woe without name—or hope—or end.—

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone,

And did he fly or fall alone?

Woe to that hour he came or went,

The curse for Hassan's sin was sent 280

To turn a palace to a tomb;

He came, he went, like the Simoom,¹⁰

That harbinger of fate and gloom,

Beneath whose widely-wasting breath

The very cypress droops to death— 285

Dark tree—still sad, when others' grief is fled,

The only constant mourner o'er the dead!

The steed is vanished from the stall,

No serf is seen in Hassan's hall

The lonely Spider's thin grey pall 290

Waves slowly widening o'er the wall;

The Bat builds in his Haram bower;

And in the fortress of his power

The Owl usurps the beacon-tower;

The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's brim, 295
With baffled thirst, and famine, grim,
For the stream has shrunk from its marble bed,
Where the weeds and the desolate dust are spread.
'Twas sweet of yore to see it play
And chase the sultriness of day— 300
As springing high the silver dew
In whirls fantastically flew,
And flung luxurious coolness round
The air, and verdure o'er the ground.—
'Twas sweet, when cloudless stars were bright, 305
To view the wave of watery light,
And hear its melody by night.—
And oft had Hassan's Childhood played
Around the verge of that cascade;
And oft upon his mother's breast 310
That sound had harmonized his rest;
And oft had Hassan's Youth along
Its bank been sooth'd by Beauty's song;
And softer seemed each melting tone
Of Music mingled with its own.— 315
But ne'er shall Hassan's Age repose
Along the brink at Twilight's close—

The stream that filled that font is fled—
The blood that warmed his heart is shed!—
And here no more shall human voice 320
Be heard to rage—regret—rejoice—
The last sad note that swelled the gale
Was woman's wildest funeral wail—
That quenched in silence—all is still,
But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill— 325
Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
No hand shall close its clasp again.
On desert sands 'twere joy to scan
The rudest steps of fellow man,
So here the very voice of Grief 330
Might wake an Echo like relief—
At least 'twould say, "all are not gone;
"There lingers Life, though but in one—
For many a gilded chamber's there,
Which Solitude might well forbear; 335
Within that dome as yet Decay
Hath slowly worked her cankering way—
But Gloom is gathered o'er the gate,
Nor there the Fakir's self will wait;

Nor there will wandering Dervise stay, 340

For Bounty cheers not his delay ;

Nor there will weary stranger halt

To bless the sacred " bread and salt." ¹¹

Alike must Wealth and Poverty

Pass heedless and unheeded by, 345

For Courtesy and Pity died

With Hassan on the mountain side.—

His roof—that refuge unto men—

Is Desolation's hungry den.—

The guest flies the hall, and the vassal from labour, 350

Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's sabre ! ¹²

* * * * *

I hear the sound of coming feet,

But not a voice mine ear to greet—

More near—each turban I can scan,

And silver-sheathed ataghan ; ¹³ 355

The foremost of the band is seen

An Emir by his garb of green : ¹⁴

" Ho ! who art thou?—this low salam ¹⁵

" Replies of Moslem faith I am.

“ The burthen ye so gently bear, 360

“ Seems one that claims your utmost care,

“ And, doubtless, holds some precious freight,

“ My humble bark would gladly wait.”

“ Thou speakest sooth, thy skiff unmoor,

“ And waft us from the silent shore ; 365

“ Nay, leave the sail still furl'd, and ply

“ The nearest oar that's scatter'd by,

“ And midway to those rocks where sleep

“ The channel'd waters dark and deep.—

“ Rest from your task—so—bravely done, 370

“ Our course has been right swiftly run,

“ Yet 'tis the longest voyage, I trow,

“ That one of—

* * * * *

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,

The calm wave rippled to the bank ; 375

I watch'd it as it sank, methought

Some motion from the current caught

Bestirr'd it more,—'twas but the beam
 That chequer'd o'er the living stream—
 I gaz'd, till vanishing from view, 380
 Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
 Still less and less, a speck of white
 That gemm'd the tide, then mock'd the sight;
 And all its hidden secrets sleep,
 Known but to Genii of the deep, 385
 Which, trembling in their coral caves,
 They dare not whisper to the waves.

* * * * *

As rising on its purple wing
 The insect-queen¹⁶ of eastern spring,
 O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer 390
 Invites the young pursuer near,
 And leads him on from flower to flower
 A weary chase and wasted hour,
 Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
 With panting heart and tearful eye: 395
 So Beauty lures the full-grown child
 With hue as bright, and wing as wild;

A chase of idle hopes and fears,
 Begun in folly, closed in tears.
 If won, to equal ills betrayed, 400
 Woe waits the insect and the maid,
 A life of pain, the loss of peace,
 From infant's play, or man's caprice :
 The lovely toy so fiercely sought
 Has lost its charm by being caught, 405
 For every touch that wooed it's stay
 Has brush'd the brightest hues away
 Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
 'Tis left to fly or fall alone.
 With wounded wing, or bleeding breast, 410
 Ah! where shall either victim rest?
 Can this with faded pinion soar
 From rose to tulip as before?
 Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,
 Find joy within her broken bower? 415
 No: gayer insects fluttering by
 Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
 And lovelier things have mercy shewn
 To every failing but their own,

And every woe a tear can claim 420
 Except an erring sister's shame.

* * * * *

The Mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
 Is like the Scorpion girt by fire,
 In circle narrowing as it glows
 The flames around their captive close, 245
 Till inly search'd by thousand throes,
 And maddening in her ire,
 One sad and sole relief she knows,
 The sting she nourish'd for her foes,
 Whose venom never yet was vain, 430
 Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
 And darts into her desperate brain.—
 So do the dark in soul expire,
 Or live like Scorpion girt by fire;¹⁷
 So writhes the mind Remorse hath riven, 435
 Unfit for earth, undoom'd for heaven,
 Darkness above, despair beneath,
 Around it flame, within it death!—

* * * * *

Black Hassan from the Haram flies,
Nor bends on woman's form his eyes, 440
The unwonted chase each hour employs,
Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.
Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
When Leila dwelt in his Serai.
Doth Leila there no longer dwell? 445
That tale can only Hassan tell:
Strange rumours in our city say
Upon that eve she fled away;
When Rhamazan's¹⁸ last sun was set,
And flashing from each minaret 450
Millions of lamps proclaim'd the feast
Of Bairam through the boundless East.
'Twas then she went as to the bath,
Which Hassan vainly search'd in wrath,
But she was flown her master's rage 455
In likeness of a Georgian page;
And far beyond the Moslem's power
Had wrong'd him with the faithless Giaour.
Somewhat of this had Hassan deem'd,
But still so fond, so fair she seem'd, 460

Too well he trusted to the slave
 Whose treachery deserv'd a grave :
 And on that eve had gone to mosque,
 And thence to feast in his kiosk.
 Such is the tale his Nubians tell, 465
 Who did not watch their charge too well ;
 But others say, that on that night,
 By pale Phingari's ¹⁹ trembling light,
 The Giaour upon his jet black steed
 Was seen—but seen alone to speed 470
 With bloody spur along the shore,
 Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

* * * * *

Her eye's dark charm 'twere vain to tell,
 But gaze on that of the Gazelle,
 It will assist thy fancy well, 475
 As large, as languishingly dark,
 But Soul beam'd forth in every spark
 That darted from beneath the lid,
 Bright as the jewel of Giamschid²⁰.

Yea, *Soul*, and should our prophet say 480
That form was nought but breathing clay,
By Alla! I would answer nay;
Though on Al-Sirat's ²¹ arch I stood,
Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
With Paradise within my view, 485
And all his Houris beckoning through.
Oh! who young Leila's glance could read
And keep that portion of his creed ²²
Which saith, that woman is but dust,
A soulless toy for tyrant's lust? 490
On her might Muftis gaze, and own
That through her eye the Immortal shone—
On her fair cheek's unfading hue,
The young pomegranate's ²³ blossoms strew
Their bloom in blushes ever new— 495
Her hair in hyacinthine ²⁴ flow
When left to roll its folds below;
As midst her handmaids in the hall
She stood superior to them all,
Hath swept the marble where her feet 500
Gleamed whiter than the mountain sleet

Ere from the cloud that gave it birth,
It fell, and caught one stain of earth.

The cygnet nobly walks the water—
So moved on earth Circassia's daughter— 505

The loveliest bird of Franguestan! ²⁵
As rears her crest the ruffled Swan,

And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
When pass the steps of stranger man

Along the banks that bound her tide; 510
Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck:—

Thus armed with beauty would she check
Intrusion's glance, till Folly's gaze

Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise.
Thus high and graceful was her gait; 515

Her heart as tender to her mate—
Her mate—stern Hassan, who was he?

Alas! that name was not for thee!
* * * * *

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta'en
With twenty vassals in his train, 520

Each arm'd as best becomes a man
With arquebuss and ataghan;

The chief before, as deck'd for war
 Bears in his belt the scimitar
 Stain'd with the best of Arnaut blood, 525
 When in the pass the rebels stood,
 And few return'd to tell the tale
 Of what befell in Parne's vale.
 The pistols which his girdle bore
 Were those that once a pasha wore, 530
 Which still, though gemm'd and boss'd with gold,
 Even robbers tremble to behold.—
 'Tis said he goes to woo a bride
 More true than her who left his side;
 The faithless slave that broke her bower, 535
 And, worse than faithless, for a Giaour!—

* * * * *

The sun's last rays are on the hill,
 And sparkle in the fountain rill,
 Whose welcome waters cool and clear,
 Draw blessings from the mountaineer; 540
 Here may the loitering merchant Greek
 Find that repose 'twere vain to seek

In cities lodg'd too near his lord,
 And trembling for his secret hoard—
 Here may he rest where none can see, 545
 In crowds a slave, in deserts free;
 And with forbidden wine may stain
 The bowl a Moslem must not drain.—

* * * * *

The foremost Tartar's in the gap,
 Conspicuous by his yellow cap, 550
 The rest in lengthening line the while
 Wind slowly through the long defile;
 Above, the mountain rears a peak,
 Where vultures whet the thirsty beak,
 And their's may be a feast to-night, 555
 Shall tempt them down ere morrow's light.
 Beneath, a river's wintry stream
 Has shrunk before the summer beam,
 And left a channel bleak and bare,
 Save shrubs that spring to perish there. 560
 Each side the midway path there lay
 Small broken crags of granite gray,

By time or mountain lightning riven,
 From summits clad in mists of heaven;
 For where is he that hath beheld 565
 The peak of Liakura unveil'd?

* * * * *

They reach the grove of pine at last,
 " Bismillah! ²⁶ now the peril's past;
 " For yonder view the opening plain,
 " And there we'll prick our steeds amain:" 570

The Chiaus spake, and as he said,
 A bullet whistled o'er his head;
 The foremost Tartar bites the ground!

Scarce had they time to check the rein
 Swift from their steeds the riders bound, 575

But three shall never mount again,
 Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
 The dying ask revenge in vain.

With steel unsheath'd, and carbine bent,
 Some o'er their courser's harness leant, 580

Half shelter'd by the steed,
 Some fly behind the nearest rock,
 And there await the coming shock,

Nor tamely stand to bleed
Beneath the shaft of foes unseen, 585
Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
Stern Hassan only from his horse
Disdains to light, and keeps his course,
Till fiery flashes in the van
Proclaim too sure the robber-clan 590
Have well secur'd the only way
Could now avail the promis'd prey;
Then curl'd his very beard²⁷ with ire,
And glared his eye with fiercer fire.
“ Though far and near the bullets hiss, 595
“ I’ve scaped a bloodier hour than this.”
And now the foe their covert quit,
And call his vassals to submit;
But Hassan’s frown and furious word
Are dreaded more than hostile sword, 600
Nor of his little band a man
Resign’d carbine or ataghan—
Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun!²⁸
In fuller sight, more near and near,
The lately ambush’d foes appear, 605

And issuing from the grove advance,
 Some who on battle charger prance.—
 Who leads them on with foreign brand,
 Far flashing in his red right hand?

“ ’Tis he—’tis he—I know him now, 610

“ I know him by his pallid brow;

“ I know him by the evil eye²⁹

“ That aids his envious treachery;

“ I know him by his jet-black barb,

“ Though now array’d in Arnaut garb, 615

“ Apostate from his own vile faith,

“ It shall not save him from the death;

“ ’Tis he, well met in any hour,

“ Lost Leila’s love—accursed Giaour!”

As rolls the river into ocean, 620

In sable torrent wildly streaming;

As the sea-tide’s opposing motion

In azure column proudly gleaming,

Beats back the current many a rood,

In curling foam and mingling flood; 625

While eddying whirl, and breaking wave,
Roused by the blast of winter rave;
Through sparkling spray in thundering clash,
The lightnings of the waters flash
In awful whiteness o'er the shore, 630
That shines and shakes beneath the roar;
Thus—as the stream and ocean greet,
With waves that madden as they meet—
Thus join the bands whom mutual wrong,
And fate and fury drive along. 635
The bickering sabres' shivering jar
And pealing wide—or ringing near
It's echoes on the throbbing ear
The deathshot hissing from afar—
The shock—the shout—the groan of war— 640
Reverberate along that vale,
More suited to the shepherd's tale:
Though few the numbers—their's the strife,
That neither spares nor speaks for life!
Ah! fondly youthful hearts can press, 645
To seize and share the dear caress;

But Love itself could never pant
 For all that Beauty sighs to grant,
 With half the fervour Hate bestows
 Upon the last embrace of foes, 650
 When grappling in the fight they fold
 Those arms that ne'er shall lose their hold;
 Friends meet to part—Love laughs at faith;—
 True foes, once met, are joined till death!

* * * * *

With sabre shiver'd to the hilt, 655
 Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
 Yet strain'd within the sever'd hand
 Which quivers round that faithless brand;
 His turban far behind him roll'd,
 And cleft in twain its firmest fold; 660
 His flowing robe by falchion torn,
 And crimson as those clouds of morn
 That streak'd with dusky red, portend
 The day shall have a stormy end;
 A stain on every bush that bore 665
 A fragment of his palampore,³

His breast with wounds unnumber'd riven,
 His back to earth, his face to heaven,
 Fall'n Hassan lies—his unclos'd eye
 Yet lowering on his enemy, 670
 As if the hour that seal'd his fate,
 Surviving left his quenchless hate;
 And o'er him bends that foe with brow
 As dark as his that bled below.—

* * * * *

“ Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave, 675
 “ But his shall be a redder grave;
 “ Her spirit pointed well the steel
 “ Which taught that felon heart to feel.
 “ He call'd the Prophet, but his power
 “ Was vain against the vengeful Giaour: 680
 “ He call'd on Alla—but the word
 “ Arose unheeded or unheard.
 “ Thou Paynim fool!—could Leila's prayer
 “ Be pass'd, and thine accorded there?
 “ I watch'd my time, I leagu'd with these, 685
 “ The traitor in his turn to seize;

“ My wrath is wreak’d, the deed is done,

“ And now I go—but go alone.”

* * * * *

* * * * *

The browzing camels’ bells are tinkling—

His Mother looked from her lattice high, 690

She saw the dews of eve besprinkling

The pasture green beneath her eye,

She saw the planets faintly twinkling,

“ ’Tis twilight—sure his train is nigh.”—

She could not rest in the garden-bower, 695

But gazed through the grate of his steepest tower—

“ Why comes he not? his steeds are fleet,

“ Nor shrink they from the summer heat;

“ Why sends not the Bridegroom his promised gift,

“ Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift? 700

“ Oh, false reproach! yon Tartar now

“ Has gained our nearest mountain’s brow,

“ And warily the steep descends,

“ And now within the valley bends;

“ And he bears the gift at his saddle bow— 705

“ How could I deem his courser slow ?

“ Right well my largess shall repay

“ His welcome speed, and weary way.”—

The Tartar lighted at the gate,

But scarce upheld his fainting weight ; 710

His swarthy visage spake distress,

But this might be from weariness ;

His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,

But these might be from his courser's side ;—

He drew the token from his vest— 715

Angel of Death ! 'tis Hassan's cloven crest !

His calpac³¹ rent—his caftan red—

“ Lady, a fearful bride thy Son hath wed—

“ Me, not from mercy, did they spare,

“ But this empurpled pledge to bear. 720

“ Peace to the brave ! whose blood is spilt—

“ Woe to the Giaour ! for his the guilt.”

* * * * *

A turban ³² carv'd in coarsest stone,
A pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
Whereon can now be scarcely read 725
The Koran verse that mourns the dead;
Point out the spot where Hassan fell
A victim in that lonely dell.
There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
As e'er at Mecca bent the knee; 730
As ever scorn'd forbidden wine,
Or pray'd with face towards the shrine,
In orisons resumed anew
At solemn sound of "Alla Hu!" ³³
Yet died he by a stranger's hand, 735
And stranger in his native land—
Yet died he as in arms he stood,
And unaveng'd, at least in blood.
But him the maids of Paradise
Impatient to their halls invite, 740
And the dark Heaven of Houri's eyes
On him shall glance for ever bright;
They come—their kerchiefs green they wave, ³⁴
And welcome with a kiss the brave!

Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour, 745
Is worthiest an immortal bower.

* * * * *

But thou, false Infidel! shalt writhe
Beneath avenging Monkir's³⁵ scythe;
And from its torment 'scape alone
To wander round lost Eblis'³⁶ throne; 750
And fire unquench'd, unquenchable—
Around—within—thy heart shall dwell,
Nor ear can hear, nor tongue can tell
The tortures of that inward hell!—
But first, on earth as Vampire³⁷ sent, 755
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent;
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race,
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
At midnight drain the stream of life; 760
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
Must feed thy livid living corse;
Thy victims ere they yet expire
Shall know the dæmon for their sire,

As cursing thee, thou cursing them, 765
Thy flowers are wither'd on the stem.
But one that for thy crime must fall—
The youngest—most lov'd of all,
Shall bless thee with a *father's* name—
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame! 770
Yet must thou end thy task, and mark
Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
And the last glassy glance must view
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
Then with unhallowed hand shalt tear 775
The tresses of her yellow hair,
Of which in life a lock when shorn,
Affection's fondest pledge was worn;
But now is borne away by thee,
Memorial of thine agony! 780
Wet with thine own best blood shall drip,³⁸
Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip;
Then stalking to thy sullen grave—
Go—and with Gouls and Afrits rave;

Till these in horror shrink away 785

From spectre more accursed than they!

* * * * *

“How name, ye yon lone Caloyer?

“His features I have scann’d before

“In mine own land—’tis many a year,

“Since, dashing by the lonely shore, 790

“I saw him urge as fleet a steed

“As ever serv’d a horseman’s need.

“But once I saw that face—yet then

“It was so mark’d with inward pain

“I could not pass it by again; 795

“It breathes the same dark spirit now,

“As death were stamped upon his brow.

“’Tis twice three years at summer tide

“Since first among our freres he came;

“And here it soothes him to abide 800

“For some dark deed he will not name.

“But never at our vesper prayer,

“Nor e’er before confession chair

“ Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
“ Incense or anthem to the skies, 805
“ But broods within his cell alone,
“ His faith and race alike unknown.
“ The sea from Paynim land he crost,
“ And here ascended from the coast,
“ Yet seems he not of Othman race, 810
“ But only Christian in his face :
“ I’d judge him some stray renegade,
“ Repentant of the change he made,
“ Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
“ Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine. 815
“ Great largess to these walls he brought,
“ And thus our abbot’s favour bought ;
“ But were I Prior, not a day
“ Should brook such stranger’s further stay,
“ Or pent within our penance cell 820
“ Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
“ Much in his visions mutters he
“ Of maiden ’whelmed beneath the sea ;
“ Of sabres clashing—foemen flying,
“ Wrongs aveng’d—and Moslem dying. 825

" On cliff he hath been known to stand,
 " And rave as to some bloody hand
 " Fresh sever'd from its parent limb,
 " Invisible to all but him,
 " Which beckons onward to his grave, 830
 " And lures to leap into the wave."

* * * * * * *
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Dark and unearthly is the scowl
 That glares beneath his dusky cowl—
 The flash of that dilating eye
 Reveals too much of times gone by— 835
 Though varying—indistinct its hue,
 Oft will his glance the gazer rue—
 For in it lurks that nameless spell
 Which speaks—itself unspeakable—
 A spirit yet unquelled and high 840
 That claims and keeps ascendancy,
 And like the bird whose pinions quake—
 But cannot fly the gazing snake—
 Will others quail beneath his look,
 Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook. 845

From him the half-affrighted Friar
When met alone would fain retire—
As if that eye and bitter smile
Transferred to others fear and guile—
Not oft to smile descendeth he, 850
And when he doth 'tis sad to see
That he but mocks at Misery.
How that pale lip will curl and quiver!
Then fix once more as if for ever—
As if his sorrow or disdain 855
Forbade him e'er to smile again.—
Well were it so—such ghastly mirth
From joyaunce ne'er deriv'd its birth.—
But sadder still it were to trace
What once were feelings in that face— 860
Time hath not yet the features fixed,
But brighter traits with evil mixed—
And there are hues not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded
Even by the crimes through which it waded— 865
The common crowd but see the gloom
Of wayward deeds—and fitting doom—

The close observer can espy
 A noble soul, and lineage high.—
 Alas! though both bestowed in vain, 870
 Which Grief could change—and Guilt could stain—
 It was no vulgar tenement
 To which such lofty gifts were lent,
 And still with little less than dread
 On such the sight is riveted.— 875
 The roofless cot decayed and rent,
 Will scarce delay the passer by—
 The tower by war or tempest bent,
 While yet may frown one battlement,
 Demands and daunts the stranger's eye— 880
 Each ivied arch—and pillar lone,
 Pleads haughtily for glories gone!

“ His floating robe around him folding,
 “ Slow sweeps he through the columned aisle—
 “ With dread beheld—with gloom beholding 885
 “ The rites that sanctify the pile.
 “ But when the anthem shakes the choir,
 “ And kneel the monks—his steps retire—

- “ By yonder lone and wavering torch
“ His aspect glares within the porch; 890
“ There will he pause till all is done—
“ And hear the prayer—but utter none.
“ See—by the half-illumin’d wall
“ His hood fly back—his dark hair fall—
“ That pale brow wildly wreathing round, 895
“ As if the Gorgon there had bound
“ The sablest of the serpent-braid
“ That o’er her fearful forehead strayed.
“ For he declines the convent oath,
“ And leaves those locks unhallowed growth— 900
“ But wears our garb in all beside;
“ And—not from piety but pride
“ Gives wealth to walls that never heard
“ Of his one holy vow nor word.—
“ Lo!—mark ye—as the harmony 905
“ Peals louder praises to the sky—
“ That livid cheek—that stoney air
“ Of mixed defiance and despair!
“ Saint Francis! keep him from the shrine!
“ Else may we dread the wrath divine 910

“ Made manifest by awful sign.—

“ If ever evil angel bore

“ The form of mortal, such he wore—

“ By all my hope of sins forgiven

“ Such looks are not of earth nor heaven!” 915

To love the softest hearts are prone,

But such can ne’er be all his own;

Too timid in his woes to share,

Too meek to meet, or brave despair;

And sterner hearts alone may feel 920

The wound that time can never heal.

The rugged metal of the mine

Must burn before its surface shine,

But plung’d within the furnace-flame,

It bends and melts—though still the same; 925

Then tempered to thy want, or will,

’Twill serve thee to defend or kill;

A breast-plate for thine hour of need,

Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed;

But if a dagger’s form it bear, 930

Let those who shape it’s edge, beware!

Thus passion's fire, and woman's art,
 Can turn and tame the sterner heart;
 From these its form and tone are ta'en,
 And what they make it, must remain, 935
 But break—before it bend again.

* * * * *

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If solitude succeed to grief,
 Release from pain is slight relief;
 The vacant bosom's wilderness
 Might thank the pang that made it less. 940
 We loathe what none are left to share—
 Even bliss—'twere woe alone to bear;
 The heart once left thus desolate,
 Must fly at last for ease—to hate.
 It is as if the dead could feel 945
 The icy worm around them steal,
 And shudder, as the reptiles creep
 To revel o'er their rotting sleep
 Without the power to scare away
 The cold consumers of their clay! 950

It is as if the desert-bird,³⁹
 Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream;
 To still her famish'd nestlings' scream,
 Nor mourns a life to them transferr'd;
 Should rend her rash devoted breast, 955
 And find them flown her empty nest.
 The keenest pangs the wretched find
 Are rapture to the dreary void—
 The leafless desert of the mind—
 The waste of feelings unemploy'd— 960
 Who would be doom'd to gaze upon
 A sky without a cloud or sun?
 Less hideous far the tempest's roar,
 Than ne'er to brave the billows more—
 Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er, 965
 A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
 'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
 Unseen to drop by dull decay;—
 Better to sink beneath the shock
 Than moulder piecemeal on the rock! 970

* * * * *

“ Father ! thy days have pass’d in peace,
“ Mid counted beads, and countless prayer;
“ To bid the sins of others cease,
“ Thyself without a crime or care,
“ Save transient ills that all must bear, 975
“ Has been thy lot, from youth to age,
“ And thou wilt bless thee from the rage
“ Of passions fierce and uncontroul’d,
“ Such as thy penitents unfold,
“ Whose secret sins and sorrows rest 980
“ Within thy pure and pitying breast.
“ My days, though few, have pass’d below
“ In much of joy, but more of woe ;
“ Yet still in hours of love or strife,
“ I’ve scap’d the weariness of life ; 985
“ Now leagu’d with friends, now girt by foes,
“ I loath’d the languor of repose ;
“ Now nothing left to love or hate,
“ No more with hope or pride elate ;
“ I’d rather be the thing that crawls 990
“ Most noxious o’er a dungeon’s walls,

“ Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
“ Condemn’d to meditate and gaze—
“ Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
“ For rest—but not to feel ’tis rest— 995
“ Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil;
“ And I shall sleep without the dream
“ Of what I was, and would be still,
“ Dark as to thee my deeds may seem—
“ My memory now is but the tomb 1000
“ Of joys long dead—my hope—their doom—
“ Though better to have died with those
“ Than bear a life of lingering woes—
“ My spirit shrunk not to sustain
“ The searching throes of ceaseless pain; 1005
“ Nor sought the self-accorded grave
“ Of ancient fool, and modern knave:
“ Yet death I have not fear’d to meet,
“ And in the field it had been sweet
“ Had danger wooed me on to move 1010
“ The slave of glory, not of love.
“ I’ve brav’d it—not for honour’s boast;
“ I smile at laurels won or lost.—

“ To such let others carve their way,
“ For high renown, or hireling pay; 1015
“ But place again before my eyes
“ Aught that I deem a worthy prize;—
“ The maid I love—the man I hate—
“ And I will hunt the steps of fate,
“ (To save or slay—as these require) 1020
“ Through rending steel, and rolling fire;
“ Nor need'st thou doubt this speech from one
“ Who would but do—what he *hath* done.
“ Death is but what the haughty brave—
“ The weak must bear—the wretch must crave— 1025
“ Then let Life go to him who gave:
“ I have not quailed to danger's brow—
“ When high and happy—need I *now*?

* * * * *

“ I lov'd her, friar! nay, adored—
“ But these are words that all can use— 1030
“ I prov'd it more in deed than word—
“ There's blood upon that dinted sword—

“ A stain it's steel can never lose :
“ 'Twas shed for her, who died for me,
“ It warmed the heart of one abhorred: 1035
“ Nay, start not—no—nor bend thy knee,
“ Nor midst my sins such act record,
“ Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
“ For he was hostile to thy creed!
“ The very name of Nazarene 1040
“ Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen,
“ Ungrateful fool! since but for brands,
“ Well wielded in some hardy hands ;
“ And wounds by Galileans given,
“ The surest pass to Turkish heav'n ; 1045
“ For him his Houris still might wait
“ Impatient at the prophet's gate.
“ I lov'd her—love will find its way
“ Through paths where wolves would fear to prey,
“ And if it dares enough, 'twere hard 1050
“ If passion met not some reward—
“ No matter how—or where—or why,
“ I did not vainly seek—nor sigh :

- “ Yet sometimes with remorse in vain
“ I wish she had not lov'd again. 1055
“ She died—I dare not tell thee how,
“ But look—'tis written on my brow !
“ There read of Cain the curse and crime,
“ In characters unworn by time :
“ Still, ere thou dost condemn me—pause— 1060
“ Not mine the act, though I the cause ;
“ Yet did he but what I had done
“ Had she been false to more than one ;
“ Faithless to him—he gave the blow,
“ But true to me—I laid him low ; 1065
“ Howe'er deserv'd her doom might be,
“ Her treachery was truth to me ;
“ To me she gave her heart, that all
“ Which tyranny can ne'er enthrall ;
“ And I, alas ! too late to save, 1070
“ Yet all I then could give—I gave—
“ 'Twas some relief—our foe a grave.
“ His death sits lightly ; but her fate
“ Has made me—what thou well may'st hate.
“ His doom was seal'd—he knew it well, 1075

- “ Warn’d by the voice of stern Taheer,
“ Deep in whose darkly boding ear⁴⁰
“ The deathshot peal’d of murder near—
“ As filed the troop to where they fell!
“ He died too in the battle broil— 1080
“ A time that heeds nor pain nor toil—
“ One cry to Mahomet for aid,
“ One prayer to Alla—all he made :
“ He knew and crossed me in the fray—
“ I gazed upon him where he lay, 1085
“ And watched his spirit ebb away ;
“ Though pierced like Pard by hunters’ steel,
“ He felt not half that now I feel.
“ I search’d, but vainly search’d to find,
“ The workings of a wounded mind; 1090
“ Each feature of that sullen corse
“ Betrayed his rage, but no remorse.
“ Oh, what had Vengeance given to trace
“ Despair upon his dying face !
“ The late repentance of that hour, 1095
“ When Penitence hath lost her power

“ To tear one terror from the grave—

“ And will not soothe, and can not save!

* * * * *

“ The cold in clime are cold in blood,

“ Their love can scarce deserve the name; 1100

“ But mine was like the lava flood

“ That boils in Ætna’s breast of flame,

“ I cannot prate in puling strain

“ Of ladye-love, and beauty’s chain;

“ If changing cheek, and scorching vein— 1105

“ Lips taught to writhe, but not complain—

“ If bursting heart, and mad’ning brain—

“ And daring deed, and vengeful steel—

“ And all that I have felt—and feel—

“ Betoken love—that love was mine, 1110

“ And shewn by many a bitter sign.

“ ’Tis true, I could not whine nor sigh,

“ I knew but to obtain or die.

“ I die—but first I have possest,

“ And come what may, I *have been* blest; 1115

“ Shall I the doom I sought upbraid?

“ No—reft of all—yet undismay’d

- “ But for the thought of Leila slain,
“ Give me the pleasure with the pain,
“ So would I live and love again. 1120
“ I grieve, but not, my holy guide !
“ For him who dies, but her who died ;
“ She sleeps beneath the wandering wave,
“ Ah ! had she but an earthly grave,
“ This breaking heart and throbbing head 1125
“ Should seek and share her narrow bed.
“ She was a form of life and light—
“ That seen—became a part of sight,
“ And rose—where’er I turned mine eye—
“ The Morning-star of Memory! 1130
“ Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven—
“ A spark of that immortal fire
“ With angels shar’d—by Alla given,
“ To lift from earth our low desire.
“ Devotion wafts the mind above, 1135
“ But Heaven itself descends in love—
“ A feeling from the Godhead caught,
“ To wean from self each sordid thought—

- “ A Ray of him who form’d the whole—
“ A Glory circling round the soul! 1140
“ I grant *my* love imperfect—all
“ That mortals by the name miscall—
“ Then deem it evil—what thou wilt—
“ But say, oh say, *hers* was not guilt!
“ She was my life’s unerring light— 1145
“ That quench’d—what beam shall break my night?
“ Oh! would it shone to lead me still,
“ Although to death or deadliest ill!—
“ Why marvel ye? if they who lose
 ‘ This present joy, this future hope, 1150
“ No more with sorrow meekly cope—
“ In phrenzy then their fate accuse—
“ In madness do those fearful deeds
 “ That seem to add but guilt to woe,
“ Alas! the breast that inly bleeds 1155
 “ Hath nought to dread from outward blow—
“ Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
“ Cares little into what abyss.—
“ Fierce as the gloomy vulture’s now
 “ To thee, old man, my deeds appear— 1160

“ I read abhorrence on thy brow,

“ And this too was I born to bear!

“ ’Tis true, that, like that bird of prey,

“ With havock have I mark’d my way—

“ But this was taught me by the dove— 1165

“ To die—and know no second love.

“ This lesson yet hath man to learn,

“ Taught by the thing he dares to spurn—

“ The bird that sings within the brake,

“ The swan that swims upon the lake, 1170

“ One mate, and one alone, will take.

“ And let the fool still prone to range,

“ And sneer on all who cannot change—

“ Partake his jest with boasting boys,

“ I envy not his varied joys— 1175

“ But deem such feeble, heartless man,

“ Less than yon solitary swan—

“ Far—far beneath the shallow maid

“ He left believing and betray’d.

“ Such shame at least was never mine— 1180

“ Leila—each thought was only thine!—

“ My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,

“ My hope on high—my all below.

- “ Earth holds no other like to thee,
“ Or if it doth, in vain for me— 1185
“ For worlds I dare not view the dame
“ Resembling thee, yet not the same.
“ The very crimes that mar my youth
“ This bed of death—attest my truth—
“ ’Tis all too late—thou wert—thou art 1190
“ The cherished madness of my heart!
- “ And she was lost—and yet I breathed,
“ But not the breath of human life—
“ A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
“ And stung my every thought to strife.— 1195
“ Alike all time—abhorred all place,
“ Shuddering I shrunk from Nature’s face,
“ Where every hue that charmed before
“ The blackness of my bosom wore:—
“ The rest—thou do’st already know, 1200
“ And all my sins and half my woe—
“ But talk no more of penitence,
“ Thou see’st I soon shall part from hence—
“ And if thy holy tale were true—
“ The deed that’s done can’st *thou* undo? 1205

- “ Think me not thankless—but this grief
“ Looks not to priesthood for relief. ⁴¹
“ My soul’s estate in secret guess—
“ But would’st thou pity more—say less—
“ When thou can’st bid my Leila live, 1210
“ Then will I sue thee to forgive;
“ Then plead my cause in that high place
“ Where purchased masses proffer grace—
“ Go—when the hunter’s hand hath wrung
“ From forest-cave her shrieking young, 1215
“ And calm the lonely lioness—
“ But soothe not—mock not *my* distress!
- “ In earlier days, and calmer hours,
“ When heart with heart delights to blend,
“ Where bloom my native valley’s bowers— 1220
“ I had—Ah! have I now?—a friend!—
“ To him this pledge I charge thee send—
“ Memorial of a youthful vow;
“ I would remind him of my end,—
“ Though souls absorbed like mine allow 1225
“ Brief thought to distant friendship’s claim,
“ Yet dear to him my blighted name.

- “ 'Tis strange—he prophesied my doom,
“ And I have smil'd—(I then could smile—)
“ When Prudence would his voice assume, 1230
“ And warn—I reck'd not what—the while—
“ But now remembrance whispers o'er
“ Those accents scarcely mark'd before.
“ Say—that his bodings came to pass,
“ And he will start to hear their truth, 1235
“ And wish his words had not been sooth,
“ Tell him—unheeding as I was—
“ Through many a busy bitter scene
“ Of all our golden youth had been—
“ In pain, my faltering tongue had tried 1240
“ To bless his memory ere I died ;
“ But heaven in wrath would turn away,
“ If Guilt should for the guiltless pray,
“ I do not ask him not to blame—
“ Too gentle he to wound my name ; 1245
“ And what have I to do with fame ?
“ I do not ask him not to mourn,
“ Such cold request might sound like scorn ;

“ And what than friendship’s manly tear

“ May better grace a brother’s bier? 1250

“ But bear this ring—his own of old—

“ And tell him—what thou dost behold!

“ The wither’d frame, the ruined mind,

“ The wrack by passion left behind—

“ A shrivell’d scroll, a scatter’d leaf, 1255

“ Sear’d by the autumn blast of grief!

* * * * *

“ Tell me no more of fancy’s gleam,

“ No, father, no, ’twas not a dream;

“ Alas! the dreamer first must sleep,

“ I only watch’d, and wish’d to weep; 1260

“ But could not, for my burning brow

“ Throbb’d to the very brain as now.

“ I wish’d but for a single tear,

“ As something welcome, new, and dear;

“ I wish’d it then—I wish it still, 1265

“ Despair is stronger than my will.

“ Waste not thine orison—despair

“ Is mightier than thy pious prayer;

- “ I would not, if I might, be blest,
“ I want no paradise—but rest. 1270
“ ’Twas then, I tell thee, father! then
“ I saw her—yes—she liv’d again ;
“ And shining in her white symar,⁴²
“ As through yon pale grey cloud—the star
“ Which now I gaze on, as on her 1275
“ Who look’d and looks far lovelier ;
“ Dimly I view its trembling spark—
“ To-morrow’s night shall be more dark—
“ And I—before its rays appear,
“ That lifeless thing the living fear. 1280
“ I wander, father! for my soul
“ Is fleeting towards the final goal;
“ I saw her, friar! and I rose,
“ Forgetful of our former woes ;
“ And rushing from my couch, I dart, 1285
“ And clasp her to my desperate heart ;
“ I clasp—what is it that I clasp ?
“ No breathing form within my grasp,
“ No heart that beats reply to mine,
“ Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine! 1290

- “ And art thou, dearest, chang’d so much,
“ As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
“ Ah! were thy beauties e’er so cold,
“ I care not—so my arms enfold
“ The all they ever wish’d to hold. 1295
“ Alas! around a shadow prest,
“ They shrink upon my lonely breast;
“ Yet still—’tis there—in silence stands,
“ And beckons with beseeching hands!
“ With braided hair, and bright-black eye— 1300
“ I knew ’twas false—she could not die!
“ But he is dead—within the dell
“ I saw him buried where he fell;
“ He comes not—for he cannot break
“ From earth—why then art thou awake? 1305
“ They told me, wild waves roll’d above
“ The face I view, the form I love;
“ They told me—’twas a hideous tale!
“ I’d tell it—but my tongue would fail—
“ If true—and from thine ocean-cave 1310
“ Thou com’st to claim a calmer grave;
“ Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o’er
“ This brow that then will burn no more;

" Or place them on my hopeless heart—
 " But, shape or shade!—whate'er thou art, 1315
 " In mercy, ne'er again depart—
 " Or farther with thee bear my soul,
 " Than winds can waft—or waters roll!—

* * * * *

" Such is my name, and such my tale,
 " Confessor—to thy secret ear, 1320
 " I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
 " And thank thee for the generous tear
 " This glazing eye could never shed,
 " Then lay me with the humblest dead,
 " And save the cross above my head, 1325
 " Be neither name nor emblem spread—
 " By prying stranger to be read,
 " Or stay the passing pilgrim's tread."
 He pass'd—nor of his name and race
 Hath left a token or a trace, 1330
 Save what the father must not say
 Who shrived him on his dying day;
 This broken tale was all we knew
 Of her he lov'd, or him he slew.⁴³

NOTES

TO

THE GIAOUR.

Note 1, page 1, line 3.

That tomb, which, gleaming o'er the cliff.

A tomb above the rocks on the promontory, by some supposed the sepulchre of Themistocles.

Note 2, page 2, line 7.

Sultana of the Nightingale.

The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable—if I mistake not, the “Bulbul of a thousand tales” is one of his appellations.

Note 3, page 3, line 3.

Till the gay mariner's guitar.

The guitar is the constant amusement of the Greek sailor by night, with a steady fair wind, and during a calm, it is accompanied always by the voice, and often by dancing.

Note 4, page 4, line 22.

Where cold Obstruction's apathy.

"Aye, but to die and go we know not where,

"To lie in cold obstruction."

Measure for Measure, Act III. 130. Sc. 2.

Note 5, page 5, line 8.

The first—last look—by death reveal'd.

I trust that few of my readers have ever had an opportunity of witnessing what is here attempted in description, but those who have will probably retain a painful remembrance of that singular beauty which pervades, with few exceptions, the features of the dead, a few hours, and but for a few hours after "the spirit is not there." It is to be remarked in cases of violent death by gun-shot wounds, the expression is always that of languor, whatever the natural energy of the sufferer's character; but in death from a stab the countenance preserves its traits of feeling or ferocity, and the mind its bias, to the last.

Note 6, page 8, line 5.

Slaves—nay the bondsmen of a slave.

Athens is the property of the Kislär Aga, (the slave of the seraglio and guardian of the women), who appoints the Waywode.—A pandar and eunuch—these are not polite yet true appellations—now governs the governor of Athens!

Note 7, page 10, line 2.

'Tis calmer than thy heart, young Giaour.

Infidel.

Note 8, page 11, line 16.

In echoes of the far tophaike.

"Tophaike," musquet.—The Bairam is announced by the cannon at sunset; the illumination of the Mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with ball, proclaim it during the night.

NOTES.

67

Note 9, page 12, line 20.

Swift as the hurled on high jerreed.

Jerreed, or Djerrid, a blunted Turkish javelin, which is darted from horseback with great force and precision. It is a favourite exercise of the Mussulmans; but I know not if it can be called a *manly* one, since the most expert in the art are the Black Eunuchs of Constantinople.—I think, next to these, a Mamlouk at Smyrna was the most skilful that came within my own observation.

Note 10, page 14, line 8.

He came, he went, like the Simoom.

The blast of the desert, fatal to every thing living, and often alluded to in eastern poetry.

Note 11, page 17, line 4.

To bless the sacred "bread and salt."

To partake of food—to break bread and salt with your host—insures the safety of the guest, even though an enemy; his person from that moment is sacred.

Note 12, page 17, line 12.

Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's sabre.

I need hardly observe, that Charity and Hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mahomet; and to say truth, very generally practised by his disciples. The first praise that can be bestowed on a chief, is a panegyric on his bounty; the next, on his valour.

Note 13, page 17, line 16.

And silver-sheathed ataghan.

The ataghan, a long dagger worn with pistols in the belt, in a metal scabbard, generally of silver; and, among the wealthier, gilt, or of gold.

Note 14, page 17, line 18.

An Emir by his garb of green.

Green is the privileged colour of the prophet's numerous pretended descendants; with them, as here, faith (the family inheritance) is supposed to supersede the necessity of good works; they are the worst of a very indifferent brood.

Note 15, page 17, line 19.

Ho! who art thou?—this low salam.

Salam aleikoum! aleikoum salam! peace be with you; be with you peace—the salutation reserved for the faithful;—to a Christian, “Urlarula,” a good journey; or saban hiresem, saban serula; good morn, good even; and sometimes, “may your end be happy;” are the usual salutes.

Note 16, page 19, line 12.

The insect-queen of eastern spring.

The blue-winged butterfly of Kashmeer, the most rare and beautiful of the species.

Note 17, page 21, line 15.

Or like the Scorpion girt by fire.

Alluding to the dubious suicide of the scorpion, so placed for experiment by gentle philosophers. Some maintain that the position of the sting, when turned towards the head, is merely a convulsive movement; but others have actually brought in the verdict “Felo de se.” The scorpions are surely interested in a speedy decision of the question, as, if once fairly established as insect Catos, they will probably be allowed to live as long as they think proper, without being martyred for the sake of an hypothesis.

Note 18, page 22, line 11.

When Rhamazan's last sun was set.

The cannon at sunset close the Rhamazan; see note 8.

Note 19, page 23, line 8.

By pale Phingari's trembling light.

Phingari, the moon.

Note 20, page 23, line 19

Bright as the jewel of Giamschid

The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendour, named Schebgerag, "the torch of night;" also, the "cup of the sun," &c.—In the first editions "Giamschid" was written as a word of three syllables, so D'Herbelot has it; but I am told Richardson reduces it to a dissyllable, and writes "Jamshid." I have left in the text the orthography of the one with the pronunciation of the other.

Note 21, page 24, line 4.

Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood.

Al-Sirat, the bridge of breadth less than the thread of a famished spider, over which the Mussulmans must *skate* into Paradise, to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskilful and tender of foot contrive to tumble with a "*facilis descensus Averni*," not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downwards for the Jews and Christians.

Note 22, page 24, line 9.

And keep that portion of his creed.

A vulgar error; the Koran allots at least a third of Paradise to well-behaved women; but by far the greater number of Mussulmans interpret the text their own way, and exclude their moieties from heaven. Being enemies to Platonics, they cannot discern "any fitness of things" in the souls of the other sex, conceiving them to be superseded by the Houris.

Note 23, page 24, line 15.

The young pomegranate's blossoms strew.

An oriental simile, which may, perhaps, though fairly stolen, be deemed "plus Arabe qu'en Arabie."

Note 24, page 24, line 17.

Her hair in hyacinthine flow.

Hyacinthine, in Arabic, "Sunbul," as common a thought in the eastern poets as it was among the Greeks.

Note 25, page 25, line 5,

The loveliest bird of Franguestan.

"Franguestan," Circassia.

Note 26, page 28, line 6.

Bismillah! now the peril's past.

Bismillah—"In the name of God;" the commencement of all the chapters of the Koran but one, and of prayer and thanksgiving.

Note 27, page 29, line 10.

Then curl'd his very beard with ire.

A phenomenon not uncommon with an angry Mussulman. In 1809, the Capitan Pacha's whiskers at a diplomatic audience were no less lively with indignation than a tiger cat's, to the horror of all the dragomans; the portentous mustachios twisted, they stood erect of their own accord, and were expected every moment to change their colour, but at last condescended to subside, which, probably, saved more heads than they contained hairs.

Note 28, page 29, line 20.

Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun!

"Amaun," quarter, pardon.

Note 29, page 30, line 7.

I know him by the evil eye.

The "evil eye," a common superstition in the Levant, and of

which the imaginary effects are yet very singular on those who conceive themselves affected.

Note 30, page 32, line 20.

A fragment of his palampore.

The flowered shawls generally worn by persons of rank.

Note 31, page 35, line 13.

His calpac rent—his caftan red.

The “Calpac” is the solid cap or centre part of the head-dress; the shawl is wound round it, and forms the turban.

Note 32, page 36, line 1.

A turban carv'd in coarsest stone.

The turban—pillar—and inscriptive verse, decorate the tombs of the Osmanlies, whether in the cemetery or the wilderness. In the mountains you frequently pass similar mementos; and on enquiry you are informed that they record some victim of rebellion, plunder, or revenge.

Note 33, page 36, line 12.

At solemn sound of “Alla Hu!”

“Alla Hu!” the concluding words of the Muezzin's call to prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the Minaret. On a still evening, when the Muezzin has a fine voice (which they frequently have) the effect is solemn and beautiful beyond all the bells in Christendom.

Note 34, page 36, line 21.

They come—their kerchiefs green they wave.

The following is part of a battle song of the Turks:—“I see—I see a dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a handkerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, Come, kiss me, for I love thee,” &c.

Note 35, page 37, line 4.

Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe.

Monkir and Nekir are the inquisitors of the dead, before whom the corpse undergoes a slight noviciate and preparatory training for damnation. If the answers are none of the clearest, he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations. The office of these angels is no sinecure; there are but two; and the number of orthodox deceased being in a small proportion to the remainder, their hands are always full.

Note 36, page 37, line 6.

To wander round lost Eblis' throne.

Eblis the Oriental Prince of Darkness.

Note 37, page 37, line 11.

But first, on earth as Vampire sent.

The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story, which Mr. Southey, in the notes on *Thalaba*, quotes about these "Vroucolochas," as he calls them. The Romaic term is "Vardoulacha." I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation. The Greeks never mention the word without horror. I find that "Broucolokas" is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—at least is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the Devil.—The moderns, however, use the word I mention.

Note 38, page 38, line 17.

Wet with thine own best blood shall drip.

The freshness of the face, and the wetness of the lip with blood, are the never-failing signs of a Vampire. The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most *incredibly* attested.

Note 39, page 47, line 1.

It is as if the desert-bird.

The pelican is, I believe, the bird so libelled, by the imputation of feeding her chickens with her blood.

Note 40, page 53, line 2.

Deep in whose darkly boding ear.

This superstition of a second-hearing (for I never met with downright second-sight in the East) fell once under my own observation.—On my third journey to Cape Colonna early in 1811, as we passed through the defile that leads from the hamlet between Keratia and Colonna, I observed Dervish Tahiri riding rather out of the path, and leaning his head upon his hand, as if in pain.—I rode up and enquired. “We are in peril,” he answered. “What peril? we are not now in Albania, nor in the passes to Ephesus, Messalunghi, or Lepanto; there are plenty of us, well armed, and the Choriates have not courage to be thieves?”—“True, Affendi, but nevertheless the shot is ringing in my ears.”—“The shot!—not a tophaike has been fired this morning.”—“I hear it notwithstanding—Bom—Bom—as plainly as I hear your voice.”—“Psha.”—“As you please, Affendi; if it is written, so will it be.”—I left this quickeared predestinarian, and rode up to Basili, his Christian compatriot; whose ears, though not at all prophetic, by no means relished the intelligence.—We all arrived at Colonna, remained some hours, and returned leisurely, saying a variety of brilliant things, in more languages than spoiled the building of Babel, upon the mistaken seer. Romaic, Arnaout, Turkish, Italian, and English were all exercised, in various conceits, upon the unfortunate Mussulman. While we were contemplating the beautiful prospect, Dervish was occupied about the columns.—I thought he was deranged into an antiquarian, and asked him if he had become a “*Palao-castro*” man: “No,” said he, “but these pillars will be useful in making a stand;” and added other remarks, which at least evinced his own belief in his

troublesome faculty of *fore-hearing*.—On our return to Athens, we heard from Leoné (a prisoner set ashore some days after) of the intended attack of the Mainotes, mentioned, with the cause of its not taking place, in the notes to Childe Harolde, Canto 2d.—I was at some pains to question the man, and he described the dresses, arms, and marks of the horses of our party so accurately, that with other circumstances, we could not doubt of *his* having been in “villanous company,” and ourselves in a bad neighbourhood.—Dervish became a soothsayer for life, and I dare say is now hearing more musquetry than ever will be fired, to the great refreshment of the Arnaouts of Berat, and his native mountains.—I shall mention one trait more of this singular race.—In March 1811, a remarkably stout and active Arnaout came (I believe the 50th on the same errand,) to offer himself as an attendant, which was declined: “Well, Affendi,” quoth he, “may you live!—you would have found me useful. I shall leave the town for the hills to-morrow, in the winter I return, perhaps you will then receive me.”—Dervish, who was present, remarked as a thing of course, and of no consequence, “in the mean time he will join the Klephtes,” (robbers), which was true to the letter.—If not cut off, they come down in the winter, and pass it unmolested in some town, where they are often as well known as their exploits.

Note 41, page 59, line 2.

Looks not to priesthood for relief.

The monk's sermon is omitted. It seems to have had so little effect upon the patient, that it could have no hopes from the reader. It may be sufficient to say, that it was of a customary length, (as may be perceived from the interruptions and uneasiness of the penitent), and was delivered in the nasal tone of all orthodox preachers.

Note 42, page 62, line 5.

And shining in her white symar.

“Symar”—Shroud.

Note 43, page 64, last line.

The circumstance to which the above story relates was not very uncommon in Turkey. A few years ago the wife of Muchtar Pacha complained to his father of his son's supposed infidelity; he asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in Yanina. They were seized, fastened up in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night! One of the guards who was present informed me, that not one of the victims uttered a cry, or shewed a symptom of terror at so sudden a "wrench from all we know, from all we love." The fate of Phrosine, the fairest of this sacrifice, is the subject of many a Romaic and Arnaut ditty. The story in the text is one told of a young Venetian many years ago, and now nearly forgotten.—I heard it by accident recited by one of the coffee-house story-tellers who abound in the Levant, and sing or recite their narratives.—The additions and interpolations by the translator will be easily distinguished from the rest by the want of Eastern imagery; and I regret that my memory has retained so few fragments of the original.

For the contents of some of the notes I am indebted partly to D'Herbelot, and partly to that most eastern, and, as Mr. Webb justly entitles it, "sublime tale," the "Caliph Vathek." I do not know from what source the author of that singular volume may have drawn his materials; some of his incidents are to be found in the "Bibliothèque Orientale;" but for correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations; and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an Eastern tale, even Rasselas must bow before it; his "Happy Valley" will not bear a comparison with the "Hall of Eblis."

Note 12, page 11, last line.

The circumstances in which the above story relates was not very un-
common in Turkey. A few years ago the wife of Michael Pasha con-
fided to his father of his son's supposed infidelity; he asked with
himself, and so had the authority to give in a list of the twelve hands
somewhat women of the harem. They were seized, brought up in order, and
thence in the same order. One of the women who was
present told me, that none of the women were at all, or showed
a symptom of terror at so sudden a "wrench" from all we know,
from all we love. The name of Pasha, the latest of this series,
is the subject of many a Russian and Arabian story. The story in the
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forgotten. I heard it by accident, recited by one of the coffee-house
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**T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London.**

For the contents of the original, and the original partly to D. Her-
bel, and partly to that most careful and able Mr. Webb, partly to the
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THE
BRIDE OF ABYDOS.

A TURKISH TALE.

BY LORD BYRON.

Had we never loved so kindly,
Had we never loved so blindly,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

BURNS.

FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed by Thomas Davison, Whitefriars,
FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

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THE
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TO

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LORD HOLLAND,

THIS TALE

IS INSCRIBED, WITH

EVERY SENTIMENT OF REGARD

AND RESPECT,

BY HIS GRATEFULLY OBLIGED

AND SINCERE FRIEND,

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THE
BRIDE OF ABYDOS.

CANTO I.

I.

KNOW ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime,
Where the rage of the vulture—the love of the turtle—
Now melt into sorrow—now madden to crime?—
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine?
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine,
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl¹ in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute; 10
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of Ocean is deepest in die;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine—

'Tis the clime of the east—'tis the land of the Sun—
 Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?²
 Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
 Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

II.

Begirt with many a gallant slave, 20
 Apparelled as becomes the brave,
 Awaiting each his Lord's behest
 To guide his steps, or guard his rest,
 Old Giaffir sate in his Divan,
 Deep thought was in his aged eye;
 And though the face of Mussulman
 Not oft betrays to standers by
 The mind within, well skill'd to hide
 All but unconquerable pride,
 His pensive cheek and pondering brow 30
 Did more than he was wont avow.

III.

"Let the chamber be cleared"—the train disappeared—
 "Now call me the chief of the Haram guard—"
 With Giaffir is none but his only son,
 And the Nubian awaiting the sire's award.

“ Haroun—when all the crowd that wait
 “ Are passed beyond the outer gate,
 “ (Woe to the head whose eye beheld
 “ My child Zuleika’s face unveiled!)
 “ Hence, lead my daughter from her tower— 40
 “ Her fate is fixed this very hour;
 “ Yet not to her repeat my thought—
 “ By me alone be duty taught!”

“ Pacha! to hear is to obey.—”
 No more must slave to despot say—
 Then to the tower had ta’en his way,
 But here young Selim silence brake,
 First lowly rendering reverence meet;
 And downcast looked, and gently spake,
 Still standing at the Pacha’s feet.— 50
 For son of Moslem must expire,
 Ere dare to sit before his sire!

“ Father!—for fear that thou should’st chide
 “ My sister, or her sable guide—
 “ Know—for the fault, if fault there be,
 “ Was mine—then fall thy frowns on me!

" So lovelily the morning shone,
 " That—let the old and weary sleep—
 " I could not; and to view alone
 " The fairest scenes of land and deep, 60
 " With none to listen and reply
 " To thoughts with which my heart beat high
 " Were irksome—for whate'er my mood,
 " In sooth I love not solitude:
 " I on Zuleika's slumber broke,
 " And, as thou knowest that for me
 " Soon turns the Haram's grating key,
 " Before the guardian slaves awoke
 " We to the cypress groves had flown,
 " And made earth, main, and heaven our own! 70
 " There lingered we, beguiled too long
 " With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song;³
 " Till I, who heard the deep tambour⁴
 " Beat thy Divan's approaching hour—
 " To thee and to my duty true,
 " Warn'd by the sound, to greet thee flew:
 " But there Zuleika wanders yet—
 " Nay, father, rage not—nor forget

“ That none can pierce that secret bower

“ But those who watch the women’s tower.” 80

IV.

Son of a slave!”—the Pacha said—

“ From unbelieving mother bred,

Vain were a father’s hope to see

“ Aught that beseems a man in thee.

“ Thou, when thine arm should bend the bow,

“ And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,

“ Thou Greek in soul, if not in creed,

“ Must pore where babbling waters flow,

“ And watch unfolding roses blow.

“ Would that yon orb, whose matin glow 90

“ Thy listless eyes so much admire,

“ Would lend thee something of his fire!

“ Thou, who would’st see this battlement

“ By Christian cannon piecemeal rent—

“ Nay, tamely view old Stambol’s wall

“ Before the dogs of Moscow fall—

“ Nor strike one stroke for life and death

“ Against the curs of Nazareth!

"Go—let thy less than woman's hand
 "Assume the distaff—not the brand. 100
 "But, Haroun!—to my daughter speed—
 "And hark—of thine own head take heed—
 "If thus Zuleika oft takes wing—
 "Thou see'st yon bow—it hath a string!"

V.

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,
 At least that met old Giaffir's ear,
 But every frown and every word
 Pierced keener than a Christian's sword—
 "Son of a slave!—reproached with fear—
 "Those gibes had cost another dear. 110
 "Son of a slave!—and *who* my sire?"
 Thus held his thoughts their dark career,
 And glances even of more than ire
 Flash forth—then faintly disappear.
 Old Giaffir gazed upon his son
 And started—for within his eye
 He read how much his wrath had done,
 He saw rebellion there begun—
 "Come hither, boy—what, no reply?"

“ I mark thee—and I know thee too ; 120
“ But there be deeds thou dar’st not do :
“ But if thy beard had manlier length,
“ And if thy hand had skill and strength,
“ I’d joy to see thee break a lance,
“ Albeit against my own perchance.”

As sneeringly these accents fell,
On Selim’s eye he fiercely gazed—
That eye returned him glance for glance,
And proudly to his sire’s was raised,
Till Giaffir’s quailed and shrunk askance— 130
And why—he felt, but durst not tell.—
“ Much I misdoubt this wayward boy
“ Will one day work me more annoy—
“ I never loved him from his birth,
“ And—but his arm is little worth,
“ And scarcely in the chace could cope
“ With timid fawn or antelope,
“ Far less would venture into strife
“ Where man contends for fame and life—
“ I would not trust that look or tone— 140
“ No—nor the blood so near my own—

" That blood—he hath not heard—no more—
 " I'll watch him closer than before—
 " He is an Arab^s to my sight,
 " Or Christian crouching in the fight.—
 " But hark!—I hear Zuleika's voice,
 " Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear;
 " She is the offspring of my choice—
 " Oh! more than even her mother dear,
 " With all to hope, and nought to fear, 150
 " My Peri! ever welcome here!
 " Sweet, as the desert-fountain's wave
 " To lips just cooled in time to save—
 " Such to my longing sight art thou;
 " Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine
 " More thanks for life, than I for thine
 " Who blest thy birth, and bless thee now."

VI.

Fair—as the first that fell of womankind—
 When on that dread yet lovely serpent smiling,
 Whose image then was stamped upon her mind— 160
 But once beguiled—and ever more beguiling;

Dazzling—as that, oh! too transcendant vision
To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber given,
When heart meets heart again in dreams Elysian,
And paints the lost on Earth revived in Heaven—
Soft—as the memory of buried love—
Pure—as the prayer which Childhood wafts above—
Was she—the daughter of that rude old Chief,
Who met the maid with tears—but not of grief.

Who hath not proved—how feebly words essay 170
To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray?
Who doth not feel—until his failing sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight—
His changing cheek—his sinking heart confess
The might—the majesty of Loveliness?
Such was Zuleika—such around her shone
The nameless charms unmarked by her alone—
The light of love—the purity of grace—
The mind—the Music breathing from her face!⁶
The heart whose softness harmonized the whole— 180
And, oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending
 Across her gently-budding breast—
 At one kind word those arms extending
 To clasp the neck of him who blest
 His child caressing and carest,
 Zuleika came—and Giaffir felt
 His purpose half within him melt;
 Not that against her fancied weal
 His heart though stern could ever feel— 190
 Affection chained her to that heart—
 Ambition tore the links apart.

VII.

“ Zuleika—child of gentleness!
 “ How dear—this very day must tell,
 “ When I forget my own distress
 “ In losing what I love so well
 “ To bid thee with another dwell,
 “ Another—and a braver man
 “ Was never seen in battle’s van.
 “ We Moslem reck not much of blood— 200
 “ But yet the line of Carasman?
 “ Unchanged—unchangeable hath stood,

" First of the bold Timariot bands
 " That won and well can keep their lands.
 " Enough—that he who comes to woo
 " Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou—
 " His years need scarce a thought employ—
 " I would not have thee wed a boy—
 " And thou shalt have a noble dower:
 " And his and my united power 210
 " Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,
 " Which others tremble but to scan—
 " And teach the messenger⁸ what fate
 " The bearer of such boon may wait.
 " And now thou know'st thy father's will—
 " All that thy sex hath need to know—
 " 'Twas mine to teach obedience still,
 " The way to love, thy lord may shew."

VIII.

In silence bowed the virgin's head—
 And if her eye was filled with tears 220
 That stifled feeling dare not shed,
 And changed her cheek from pale to red,

And red to pale, as through her ears
 Those winged words like arrows sped—
 What could such be but maiden fears?
 So bright the tear in Beauty's eye
 Love half regrets to kiss it dry—
 So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,
 Even Pity scarce can wish it less!

Whate'er it was the sire forgot— 230
 Or if remembered, marked it not—
 Thrice clapped his hands, and called his steed,
 Resign'd his gem-adorn'd Chibouque,¹⁰
 And mounting featly for the mead,
 With Maugrabee¹¹—and Mamaluke—
 His way amid his Delis took,¹²
 To witness many an active deed
 With sabre keen—or blunt jereed.
 The Kislär only and his Moors
 Watch well the Haram's massy doors. 240

IX.

His head was leant upon his hand,
 His eye looked o'er the dark blue water,

That swiftly glides and gently swells
Between the winding Dardanelles;
But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,
Nor even his Pacha's turbaned band
Mix in the game of mimic slaughter;
Careering cleave the folded felt¹³
With sabre stroke right sharply dealt—
Nor marked the javelin-darting crowd, 250
Nor heard their Ollahs¹⁴ wild and loud—
He thought but of old Giaffir's daughter.

X.

No word from Selim's bosom broke—
One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke—
Still gazed he through the lattice grate,
Pale—mute—and mournfully sedate.—
To him Zuleika's eye was turned,
But little from his aspect learned;
Equal her grief—yet not the same,
Her heart confessed a gentler flame— 260
But yet that heart alarmed or weak,
She knew not why, forbade to speak—

Yet speak she must—but when essay—

“How strange he thus should turn away!

“Not thus we e’er before have met,

“Not thus shall be our parting yet.”—

Thrice paced she slowly through the room,

And watched his eye—it still was fixed—

She snatched the urn wherein was mixed

The Persian Atar-gul’s¹⁵ perfume,

270

And sprinkled all it’s odours o’er

The pictured roof¹⁶ and marble floor—

The drops, that through his glittering vest

The playful girl’s appeal addrest,

Unheeded o’er his bosom flew,

As if that breast were marble too—

“What sullen yet? it must not be—

“Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!”

She saw in curious order set

The fairest flowers of Eastern land—

280

“He loved them once—may touch them yet,

“If offered by Zuleika’s hand.”

The childish thought was hardly breathed

Before the Rose was pluck’d and wreathed—

The next fond moment saw her seat
Her fairy form at Selim's feet—

“ This rose to calm my brother's cares

“ A message from the Bulbul¹⁷ bears;

“ It says to-night he will prolong,

“ For Selim's ear his sweetest song—

290

“ And though his note is somewhat sad,

“ He'll try for once a strain more glad,

“ With some faint hope his altered lay

“ May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

XI.

“ What—not receive my foolish flower?—

“ Nay then I am indeed unblest:

“ On me can thus thy forehead lower?

“ And know'st thou not who loves thee best?

“ Oh, Selim dear!—Oh, more than dearest!

“ Say, is it I thou hat'st or fearest?

300

“ Come, lay thy head upon my breast,

“ And I will kiss thee into rest,

“ Since words of mine—and songs must fail,

“ Even from my fabled nightingale.

“ I knew our sire at times was stern,
“ But this from thee had yet to learn—
“ Too well I know he loves thee not,
“ But is Zuleika’s love forgot?
“ Ah! deem I right? the Pacha’s plan—
“ This kinsman Bey of Carasman 310
“ Perhaps may prove some foe of thine—
“ If so—I swear by Mecca’s shrine,
“ If shrines, that ne’er approach allow
“ To woman’s step, admit her vow—
“ Without thy free consent, command—
“ The Sultan should not have my hand!
“ Think’st thou that I could bear to part
“ With thee—and learn to halve my heart?
“ Ah! were I severed from thy side,
“ Where were thy friend—and who my guide? 320
“ Years have not seen—Time shall not see
“ The hour that tears my soul from thee—
“ Even Azrael¹⁸ from his deadly quiver
“ When flies that shaft—and fly it must—
“ That parts all else—shall doom for ever
“ Our hearts to undivided dust!”

XII.

He lived—he breathed—he moved—he felt—
He raised the maid from where she knelt—
His trance was gone—his keen eye shone
With thoughts that long in darkness dwelt— 330
With thoughts that burn—in rays that melt.—
As the stream late concealed
By the fringe of it's willows—
When it rushes revealed
In the light of its billows,—
As the bolt bursts on high
From the black cloud that bound it—
Flash'd the soul of that eye
Through the long lashes round it.
A warhorse at the trumpet's sound, 340
A lion roused by heedless hound;
A tyrant waked to sudden strife
By graze of ill-directed knife,
Starts not to more convulsive life
Than he, who heard that vow, displayed,
And all, before repressed, betrayed.

“ Now thou art mine, for ever mine,
“ With life to keep, and scarce with life resign ;—
“ Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,
“ Though sworn by one, hath bound us both. 350
“ Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done,
“ That vow hath saved more heads than one :—
“ But blench not thou—thy simplest tress
“ Claims more from me than tenderness ;
“ I would not wrong the slenderest hair
“ That clusters round thy forehead fair,
“ For all the treasures buried far
“ Within the caves of Istakar.¹⁹
“ This morning clouds upon me lowered,
“ Reproaches on my head were showered, 360
“ And Giaffir almost called me coward !
“ Now I have motive to be brave,
“ The son of his neglected slave :
“ Nay, start not—’twas the term he gave—
“ May shew, though little apt to vaunt,
“ A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.
“ *His* son, indeed !—yet, thanks to thee,
“ Perchance I am, at least shall be ;

" But let our plighted secret vow
 " Be only known to us as now. 370
 " I know the wretch who dares demand
 " From Giaffir thy reluctant hand ;
 " More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul
 " Holds not a Musselim's²⁰ control ;
 " Was he not bred in Egripo ?²¹
 " A viler race let Israel show !
 " But let that pass—to none be told
 " Our oath—the rest shall time unfold ;
 " To me and mine leave Osman Bey,
 " I've partizans for peril's day ; 380
 " Think not I am what I appear,
 " I've arms, and friends, and vengeance near."

XIII.

" Think not thou art what thou appearest !
 " My Selim, thou art sadly changed ;
 " This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest,
 " But now thou'rt from thyself estranged.
 " My love thou surely knew'st before,
 " It ne'er was less nor can be more.

- “ To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,
“ And hate the night I know not why, 390
“ Save that we meet not but by day—
“ With thee to live, with thee to die,
“ I dare not to my hope deny :
“ Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,
“ Like this—and this—no more than this,
“ For, Alla ! sure thy lips are flame,
“ What fever in thy veins is flushing ?
“ My own have nearly caught the same,
“ At least I feel my cheek too blushing.
“ To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health, 400
“ Partake, but never waste thy wealth,
“ Or stand with smiles unmurmuring by,
“ And lighten half thy poverty ;
“ Do all but close thy dying eye,
“ For that I could not live to try ;
“ To these alone my thoughts aspire—
“ More can I do ? or thou require ?
“ But, Selim, thou must answer why
“ We need so much of mystery ?

- “ The cause I cannot dream nor tell, 410
“ But be it, since thou say'st 'tis well ;
“ Yet what thou mean'st by ' arms ' and ' friends ',
“ Beyond my weaker sense extends—
“ I meant that Giaffir should have heard
“ The very vow I plighted thee ;
“ His wrath would not revoke my word—
“ But surely he would leave me free ;
“ Can this fond wish seem strange in me
“ To be what I have ever been ?
“ What other hath Zuleika seen 420
“ From simple childhood's earliest hour ?
“ What other can she seek to see
“ Than thee, companion of her bower,
“ The partner of her infancy ?
“ These cherished thoughts with life begun,
“ Say, why must I no more avow ?
“ What change is wrought to make me shun
“ The truth—my pride—and thine till now ?
“ To meet the gaze of strangers eyes
“ Our law, our creed, our God denies ; 430
“ Nor shall one wandering thought of mine
“ At such, our Prophet's will, repine :

- “ No—happier made by that decree,
“ He left me all in leaving thee.
“ Deep were my anguish, thus compelled
“ To wed with one I ne’er beheld—
“ This—wherefore should I not reveal?
“ Why wilt thou urge me to conceal?
“ I know the Pacha’s haughty mood
“ To thee hath never boded good ; 440
“ And he so often storms at nought,
“ Allah ! forbid that e’er he ought !
“ And why I know not, but within
“ My heart concealment weighs like sin.
“ If then such secrecy be crime,
 “ And such it feels while lurking here ;
“ Oh, Selim ! tell me yet in time,
 “ Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.
“ Ah ! yonder see the Tchocadar,²²
“ My father leaves the mimic war ; 450
“ I tremble now to meet his eye—
“ Say, Selim, can’st thou tell me why ?”

XIV.

- “ Zuleika—to thy tower’s retreat
“ Betake thee—Giaffir I can greet;
“ And now with him I fain must prate
“ Of firmans, imposts, levies, state;
“ There’s fearful news from Danube’s banks,
“ Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,
“ For which the Giour may give him thanks!
“ Our Sultan hath a shorter way 460
“ Such costly triumph to repay.
“ But, mark me, when the twilight drum
“ Hath warned the troops to food and sleep,
“ Unto thy cell will Selim come:
“ Then softly from the Haram creep
“ Where we may wander by the deep,
“ Our garden-battlements are steep:
“ Nor these will rash intruder climb
“ To list our words, or stint our time;
“ And if he doth—I want not steel 470
“ Which some have felt, and more may feel.
“ Then shalt thou learn of Selim more
“ Than thou hast heard or thought before;

“ Trust me, Zuleika—fear not me !

“ Thou know’st I hold a Haram key.”

“ Fear thee, my Selim ! ne’er till now

“ Did word like this—”

“ Delay not thou ;

“ I keep the key—and Haroun’s guard

“ Have *some*, and hope, of *more* reward.

480

“ To night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear

“ My tale, my purpose, and my fear—

“ I am not, love ! what I appear.”

END OF CANTO I.

THE
BRIDE OF ABYDOS.

CANTO II.

THE winds are high on Helle's wave,
As on that night of stormy water
When Love—who sent—forgot to save
The young, the beautiful, the brave,
The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
Oh! when alone along the sky
Her turret-torch was blazing high,
Though rising gale, and breaking foam,
And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him home;
And clouds aloft, and tides below, 10
With signs and sounds forbade to go,
He could not see, he would not hear,
Or sound or sign foreboding fear;

His eye but saw that light of love,
 The only star it hail'd above ;
 His ear but rang with Hero's song,
 " Ye waves divide not lovers long !"
 That tale is old, but love anew
 May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

II.

The winds are high—and Helle's tide 20
 Rolls darkly heaving to the main;
 And Night's descending shadows hide
 That field with blood bedew'd in vain;
 The desart of old Priam's pride—
 The tombs—sole relics of his reign—
 All, save immortal dreams that could beguile
 The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

III.

Oh! yet—for there my steps have been,
 These feet have press'd the sacred shore,
 These limbs that buoyant wave hath borne— 30
 Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn—
 To trace again those fields of yore—

Believing every hillock green
Contains no fabled hero's ashes—
And that around the undoubted scene
Thine own "broad Hellespont"²³ still dashes—
Be long my lot—and cold were he
Who there could gaze denying thee!

IV.

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,
Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill 40
That moon, which shone on his high theme—
No warrior chides her peaceful beam,
But conscious shepherds bless it still.
Their flocks are grazing on the mound
Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow;—
That mighty heap of gather'd ground
Which Ammon's²⁴ son ran proudly round,
By nations rais'd, by monarchs crown'd,
Is now a lone and nameless barrow
Within—thy dwelling-place how narrow! 50
Without—can only strangers breathe
The name of him that *was* beneath.

Dust long outlasts the storied stone—
But Thou—thy very dust is gone!

V.

Late, late to night will Dian cheer
The swain, and chase the boatman's fear;
Till then—no beacon on the cliff
May shape the course of struggling skiff;
The scatter'd lights that skirt the bay,
All, one by one, have died away; 60
The only lamp of this lone hour
Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.

Yes, there is light in that lone chamber,
And o'er her silken Ottoman
Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,
O'er which her fairy fingers ran;²⁵
Near these, with emerald rays beset,
How could she thus that gem forget?
Her mother's sainted amulet,²⁶
Whereon engraved the Koorsee text, 70
Could smooth this life, and win the next;

And by her Comboloio²⁷ lies
A Koran of illumin'd dyes;
And many a bright emblazon'd rhyme
By Persian scribes redeem'd from time;
And o'er those scrolls, not oft-so mute,
Reclines her now neglected lute;
And round her lamp of fretted gold
Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould;
The richest work of Iran's loom, 80
And Sheeraz' tribute of perfume;
All that can eye or sense delight
Are gather'd in that gorgeous room—
But yet it hath an air of gloom.—
She, of this Peri cell the sprite,
What doth she hence, and on so rude a night?

VI.

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,
Which none save noblest Moslem wear,
To guard from winds of heaven the breast
As heaven itself to Selim dear; 90

With cautious steps the thicket threading,
And starting oft, as through the glade
The gust its hollow moanings made,
Till on the smoother pathway treading,
More free her timid bosom beat,
The maid pursued her silent guide;
And though her terror urged retreat,
How could she quit her Selim's side?
How teach her tender lips to chide?

VII.

They reach'd at length a grotto, hewn 100
By nature, but enlarged by art,
Where oft her lute she wont to tune,
And oft her Koran conned apart;
And oft in youthful reverie
She dream'd what Paradise might be—
Where woman's parted soul shall go
Her Prophet had disdain'd to show;
But Selim's mansion was secure,
Nor deem'd she, could he long endure

His bower in other worlds of bliss, 110
Without *her* most beloved in this!
Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?
What Houri soothe him half so well?

VIII.

Since last she visited the spot
Some change seem'd wrought within the grot:
It might be only that the night
Disguis'd things seen by better light—
That brazen lamp but dimly threw
A ray of no celestial hue;
But in a nook within the cell 120
Her eye on stranger objects fell.
There arms were piled, not such as wield
The turban'd Delis in the field;
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,
And one was red—perchance with guilt—
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?
A cup too on the board was set
That did not seem to hold sherbet.
What may this mean—she turn'd to see
Her Selim—"Oh! can this be he?" 130

IX.

His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crown'd turban bore,
But in its stead a shawl of red,
Wreath'd lightly round, his temples wore:—
That dagger, on whose hilt the gem
Were worthy of a diadem,
No longer glitter'd at his waist,
Where pistols unadorn'd were braced.
And from his belt a sabre swung,
And from his shoulder loosely hung 140
The cloak of white—the thin capote
That decks the wandering Candiote:
Beneath—his golden plated vest
Clung like a cuirass to his breast—
The greaves below his knee that wound
With silvery scales were sheathed and bound.
But were it not that high command
Spake in his eye—and tone and hand—
All that a careless eye could see
In him was some young Galiongée.²⁸ 150

X.

“ I said I was not what I seemed—

“ And now thou seest my words were true;

“ I have a tale thou hast not dreamed,

“ If sooth—its truth must others rue.

“ My story now ’twere vain to hide,

“ I must not see thee Osman’s bride:

“ But had not thine own lips declared

“ How much of that young heart I shared,

“ I could not, must not, yet have shown

“ The darker secret of my own.—

160

“ In this I speak not now of love—

“ That—let time, truth, and peril prove;

“ But first—Oh! never wed another—

“ Zuleika! I am not thy brother!”

XI.

“ Oh! not my brother!—yet unsay—

“ God! am I left alone on earth?—

“ To mourn—I dare not curse—the day

“ That saw my solitary birth!

“ Oh ! thou wilt love me now no more !

“ My sinking heart foreboded ill ; 170

“ But know *me* all I was before,

“ Thy sister—friend—Zuleika still.

“ Thou led'st me here perchance to kill ;

“ If thou hast cause for vengeance—See !

“ My breast is offered—take thy fill !

“ Far better with the dead to be

“ Than live thus nothing now to thee—

“ Perhaps far worse—for now I know

“ Why Giaffir always seemed thy foe ;

“ And I, alas ! am Giaffir's child, 180

“ For whom thou wert contemned—reviled—

“ If not thy sister—wouldst thou save

“ My life—Oh ! bid me be thy slave !”

XII.

“ My slave, Zuleika !—nay, I'm thine :

“ But, gentle love, this transport calm,

“ Thy lot shall yet be linked with mine ;

“ I swear it by our Prophet's shrine,

“ And be that thought thy sorrow's balm.

- “ So may the Koran²⁹ verse displayed
“ Upon its steel direct my blade, 190
“ In danger’s hour to guard us both,
“ As I preserve that awful oath !
“ The name in which thy heart hath prided
“ Must change—but, my Zuleika, know,
“ That tie is widened—not divided—
“ Although thy Sire’s my deadliest foe.
“ My father was to Giaffir all
“ That Selim late was deemed to thee ;
“ That brother wrought a brother’s fall,
“ But spared—at least, my infancy— 200
“ And lulled me with a vain deceit
“ That yet a like return may meet.
“ He reared me—not with tender help—
“ But like the nephew of a Cain,³⁰
“ He watched me like a lion’s whelp,
“ That gnaws and yet may break his chain.
“ My father’s blood in every vein
“ Is boiling—but for thy dear sake
“ No present vengeance will I take—
“ Though here I must no more remain. 210

“ But first—beloved Zuleika!—hear

“ How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

XIII.

“ How first their strife to rancour grew—

“ If love or envy made them foes—

“ It matters little if I knew ;

“ In fiery spirits, slights though few

“ And thoughtless will disturb repose :

“ In war Abdallah’s arm was strong,

“ Remembered yet in Bosniac song,

“ And Paswan’s³¹ rebel hordes attest

220

“ How little love they bore such guest.

“ His death is all I need relate,

“ The stern effect of Giaffir’s hate ;

“ And how my birth disclosed to me,

“ Whate’er beside it makes—hath made me—free.

XIV.

“ When Paswan, after years of strife,

“ At last for power—but first for life—

“ In Widin’s walls too proudly sate—

“ Our Pachas rallied round the state ;

“ Nor last nor least in high command ” 230

“ Each brother led a separate band ;

“ They gave their horsetails³² to the wind,

“ And mustering in Sophia’s plain

“ Their tents were pitched—their post assigned—

“ To one, alas ! assigned in vain !—

“ What need of words ?—the deadly bowl,

“ By Giaffir’s order drugged and given,

“ With venom subtle as his soul,

“ Dismissed Abdallah’s hence to heaven.

“ Reclined and feverish in the bath, ” 240

“ He, when the hunter’s sport was up,

“ But little deemed a brother’s wrath

“ To quench his thirst had such a cup.

“ The bowl a bribed attendant bore,

“ He drank one draught³³—nor needed more !

“ If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt—

“ Call Haroun—he can tell it out.

XV.

“ The deed once done—and Paswan’s feud

“ In part suppressed—though ne’er subdued—

“ Abdallah’s Pachalick was gained— 250

“ (Thou know’st not what in our Divan

“ Can wealth procure for worse than man):

“ Abdallah’s honours were obtained

“ By him a brother’s murder stained ;

“ ’Tis true—the purchase nearly drained

“ His ill got treasure—soon replaced—

“ Would’st question whence?—Survey the waste—

“ And ask the squalid peasant how

“ His gains repay his broiling brow !

“ Why me the stern usurper spared, 260

“ Why thus with me his palace shared,

“ I know not.—Shame—regret—remorse—

“ And little fear from infant’s force—

“ Besides—adoption as a son

“ By him whom Heaven accorded none:

“ Or some unknown cabal—caprice—

“ Preserved me thus, but not in peace ;

“ He cannot curb his haughty mood,

“ Nor I forgive a father’s blood.

XVI.

- “ Within thy father’s house are foes— 270
“ Not all who break his bread are true ;
“ To these should I my birth disclose,
“ His days—his very hours were few :
“ They only want a heart to lead,
“ A hand to point them to the deed.
“ But Haroun only knows—or knew
“ This tale—whose close is almost nigh—
“ He in Abdallah’s palace grew,
“ And held that post in his Serai
“ Which holds he here—he saw him die : 280
“ But what could single slavery do ?
“ Avenge his lord—alas ! too late—
“ Or save his son from such a fate ?
“ He chose the last—and when elate
“ With foes subdued—or friends betrayed—
“ Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,
“ He led me helpless to his gate,
“ And not in vain it seems essayed
“ To save the life for which he prayed.

“ The knowledge of my birth secured 290

“ From all and each—but most from me ;

“ Thus Giaffir’s safety was ensured,

“ Removed he too from Roumelie

“ To this our Asiatic side,

“ Far from our seats by Danube’s tide—

“ With none but Haroun, who retains

“ Such knowledge—and that Nubian feels

“ A tyrant’s secrets are but chains,

“ From which the captive gladly steals,

“ And this and more to me reveals. 300

“ Such still to guilt just Alla sends

“ Slaves—tools—accomplices—no friends !

XVII.

“ All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds,

“ But harsher still my tale must be,

“ Howe’er my tongue thy softness wounds,

“ Yet I must prove all truth to thee ;

“ I saw thee start this garb to see,

“ Yet is it one I oft have worn,

“ And long must wear—this Galiongée

“ To whom thy plighted vow is sworn, 310

“ Is leader of those pirate hordes,
“ Whose laws and lives are on their swords;
“ To hear whose desolating tale
“ Would make thy waning cheek more pale;
“ Those arms thou see'st my band have brought,
“ The hands that wield are not remote;
“ This cup too for the rugged knaves
“ Is filled—once quaffed, they ne'er repine,
“ Our Prophet might forgive the slaves,
“ They're only infidels in wine. 320

XVIII.

“ What could I be?—Proscribed at home,
“ And taunted to a wish to roam;
“ And listless left—for Giaffir's fear
“ Denied the courser and the spear;
“ Though oft—Oh, Mahomet! how oft
“ In full Divan the despot scoffed,
“ As if *my* weak unwilling hand
“ Refused the bridle or the brand:
“ He ever went to war alone,
“ And pent me here untried—unknown— 330

“ To Haroun’s care with women left,
“ By hope unblest—of fame bereft.
“ While thou—whose softness long endeared,
“ Though it unmanned me, still had cheered—
“ To Brusa’s walls for safety sent,
“ Awaited’st there the field’s event;—
“ Haroun, who saw my spirit pining
 “ Beneath inaction’s sluggish yoke,
“ His captive, though with dread resigning,
 “ My thraldom for a season broke; 340
“ On promise to return before
“ The day when Giaffir’s charge was o’er.
“ ’Tis vain—my tongue can not impart
“ My almost drunkenness of heart,
“ When first this liberated eye
“ Surveyed Earth—Ocean—Sun and Sky!
“ As if my spirit pierced them through,
“ And all their inmost wonders knew—
“ One word alone can paint to thee
“ That more than feeling—I was Free! 350
“ E’en for thy presence ceased to pine—
“ The World—nay—Heaven itself was mine!

XIX.

“ The shallop of a trusty Moor
“ Conveyed me from this idle shore ;
“ I longed to see the isles that gem
“ Old Ocean’s purple diadem :
“ I sought by turns, and saw them all,³⁴
“ But when and where I joined the crew,
“ With whom I’m pledged to rise or fall,
“ When all that we design to do 360
“ Is done—’twill then be time more meet
“ To tell thee, when the tale’s complete.

XX.

“ ’Tis true—they are a lawless brood,
“ But rough in form, nor mild in mood ;
“ And every creed, and every race,
“ With them hath found—may find a place ;
“ But open speech, and ready hand,
“ Obedience to their chief’s command ;
“ A soul for every enterprize,
“ That never sees with terror’s eyes ; 370
“ Friendship for each, and faith to all,
“ And vengeance vow’d for those who fall ;
“ Have made them fitting instruments
“ For more than even my own intents.

- “ And some—and I have studied all
“ Distinguish’d from the vulgar rank,
“ But chiefly to my council call
“ The wisdom of the cautious Frank :—
“ And some to higher thoughts aspire,
“ The last of Lambro’s ³⁵ patriots there 380
“ Anticipated freedom share;
“ And oft around the cavern fire
“ On visionary schemes debate,
“ To snatch the Rayahs ³⁶ from their fate.—
“ So let them ease their hearts with prate
“ Of equal rights, which man ne’er knew,
“ I have a love for freedom too.
“ Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch ³⁷ roam,
“ Or only know on land the Tartar’s home, ³⁸—
“ My tent on shore—my galley on the sea— 390
“ Are more than cities and Serais to me;
“ Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,
“ Across the desart, or before the gale,
“ Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or glide my prow,
“ But be the star that guides the wanderer—Thou!
“ Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my bark—
“ The Dove of peace and promise to mine ark!

- “ Or since that hope denied in worlds of strife—
“ Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!
“ The evening beam that smiles the clouds away, 400
“ And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!
“ Blest—as the Muezzin’s strain from Mecca’s wall
“ To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call;
“ Soft—as the melody of youthful days,
“ That steals the trembling tear of speechless praise;
“ Dear—as his native song to Exile’s ears,
“ Shall sound each tone thy long-loved voice endears.
“ For thee in those bright isles is built a bower
“ Blooming as Aden³⁹ in its earliest hour.
“ A thousand swords—thy Selim’s heart and hand— 410
“ Wait—wave—defend—destroy—at thy command!
“ Girt by my band—Zuleika at my side—
“ The spoil of nations shall bedeck my bride:—
“ The Haram’s languid years of listless ease
“ Are well resign’d for cares—for joys like these:
“ Not blind to fate—I see where’er I rove
“ Unnumber’d perils—but one only love!
“ Yet well my toils shall that fond breast repay,
“ Though fortune frown, or falser friends betray.
“ How dear the dream! in darkest hours of ill, 420
“ Should all be changed, to find thee faithful still!

- “ Be but thy soul, like Selim’s, firmly shown—
“ To thee, be Selim’s tender as thine own!
“ To soothe each sorrow—share in each delight—
“ Blend every thought—do all but disunite!
“ Once free—’tis mine our horde again to guide—
“ Friends to each other, foes to aught beside:—
“ Yet there we follow but the bent assign’d
“ By fatal Nature to man’s warring kind,
“ Mark! where his carnage and his conquests cease— 430
“ He makes a solitude—and calls it—peace!
“ I like the rest must use my skill or strength,
“ But ask no land beyond my sabre’s length;—
“ Power sways but by division—her resource
“ The blest alternative of fraud or force!
“ Ours be the last—in time deceit may come
“ When cities cage us in a social home:
“ There even thy soul might err—how oft the heart
“ Corruption shakes—which Peril could not part!—
“ And woman, more than man, when death or woe 440
“ Or even Disgrace would lay her lover low—
“ Sunk in the lap of Luxury will shame—
“ Away suspicion!—*not* Zuleika’s name!
“ But life is hazard at the best—and here
“ No more remains to win, and much to fear—

- “ Yes, fear! the doubt, the dread of losing thee,
“ By Osman’s power, and Giaffir’s stern decree—
“ That dread shall vanish with the favouring gale,
“ Which Love to night hath promised to my sail—
“ No danger daunts the pair his smile hath blest, 450
“ Their steps still roving, but their hearts at rest;
“ With thee all toils are sweet—each clime hath charms,
“ Earth—sea alike—our world within our arms!
“ Ay—let the loud winds whistle o’er the deck—
“ So that those arms cling closer round my neck—
“ The deepest murmur of this lip shall be
“ No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!
“ The war of elements no fears impart
“ To Love, whose deadliest bane is human Art
“ *There* lie the only rocks our course can check, 460
“ *Here* moments menace—*there* are years of wreck!
“ But hence ye thoughts! that rise in Horror’s shape—
“ This hour bestows—or ever bars escape—
“ Few words remain of mine my tale to close—
“ Of thine but *one* to waft us from our foes:—
“ Yea—foes—to me will Giaffir’s hate decline?
“ And is not Osman—who would part us—thine?

XXI.

- “ His head and faith from doubt and death
“ Returned in time my guard to save ;
“ Few heard—none told—that o’er the wave 470
“ From isle to isle I roved the while ;
“ And since, though parted from my band
“ Too seldom now I leave the land ;
“ No deed they’ve done—nor deed shall do,
“ Ere I have heard and doomed it too ;
“ I form the plan, decree the spoil,
“ ’Tis fit I oftener share the toil.
“ But now too long I’ve held thine ear,
“ Time presses—floats my bark—and here
“ We leave behind but hate and fear. 480
“ To-morrow Osman with his train
“ Arrives—to-night must break thy chain ;
“ And would’st thou save that haughty Bey
“ Perchance—*his* life who gave thee thine—
“ With me this hour away—away—
“ But yet, though thou art plighted mine,
“ Would’st thou recal thy willing vow,
“ Appalled by truths imparted now—

“ Here rest I—not to see thee wed,

“ But be that peril on *my* head !” 490

XXII.

Zuleika—mute and motionless,
 Stood like that statue of distress—

When, her last hope for ever gone,

The mother hardened into stone ;

All in the maid that eye could see

Was but a younger Niobé !—

But ere her lip, or even her eye,

Essayed to speak, or look reply—

Beneath the garden’s wicket porch

Far flashed on high a blazing torch ! 500

Another—and another—and another—

“ Oh ! fly—no more—yet now my more than brother !”

Far—wide through every thicket spread

The fearful lights are gleaming red ;

Nor these alone—for each right hand

Is ready with a sheathless brand :—

They part, pursue, return, and wheel

With searching flambeau, shining steel ;

And last of all his sabre waving,
 Stern Giaffir in his fury raving, 510
 And now almost they touch the cave—
 Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

XXIII.

Dauntless he stood—" 'Tis come—soon past—
 " One kiss, Zuleika—'tis my last;
 " But yet my band not far from shore
 " May hear this signal—see the flash—
 " Yet now too few—the attempt were rash—
 " No matter—yet one effort more."
 Forth to the cavern mouth he stept,
 His pistol's echo rang on high: 520
 Zuleika started not, nor wept,
 Despair benumbed her breast and eye!
 " They hear me not, or if they ply
 " Their oars, 'tis but to see me die;
 " That sound hath drawn my foes more nigh.
 " Then forth my father's scimitar,
 " Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!

“ Farewell, Zuleika!—Sweet! retire—
 “ Yet stay within—here linger safe,
 “ At thee his rage will only chafe.— 530
 “ Stir not—lest even to thee perchance
 “ Some erring blade or ball should glance:
 “ Fear’st thou for him?—may I expire
 “ If in this strife I seek thy sire!—
 “ No—though by him that poison poured—
 “ No—though again he call me coward!—
 “ But tamely shall I meet their steel?
 “ No—as each crest save *his* may feel!

XXIV.

One bound he made, and gained the sand—
 Already at his feet hath sunk 540
 The foremost of the prying band—
 A gasping head, a quivering trunk;
 Another falls—but round him close
 A swarming circle of his foes:
 From right to left his path he cleft,
 And almost met the meeting wave;—
 His boat appears—not five oars’ length—
 His comrades strain with desperate strength—

Oh! are they yet in time to save?

His feet the foremost breakers lave; 550

His band are plunging in the bay,

Their sabres glitter through the spray;

Wet—wild—unwearied to the strand

They struggle—now they touch the land!

They come—'tis but to add to slaughter—

His heart's best blood is on the water!

XXV.

Escaped from shot—unharm'd by steel,

Or scarcely grazed it's force to feel—

Had Selim won—betrayed—beset—

To where the strand and billows met— 560

There as his last step left the land,

And the last death-blow dealt his hand—

Ah! wherefore did he turn to look

For her his eye but sought in vain?

That pause—that fatal gaze he took—

Hath doomed his death—or fixed his chain—

Sad proof—in peril and in pain

How late will Lover's hope remain!—

His back was to the dashing spray—

Behind but close—his comrades lay— 570

When at the instant, hissed the ball,
“ So may the foes of Giaffir fall !”
Whose voice is heard ? whose carbine rang ?
Whose bullet through the night-air sang ?
Too nearly—deadly aimed to err—
’Tis thine—Abdallah’s Murderer !
The father slowly rued thy hate,
The son hath found a quicker fate—
Fast from his breast the blood is bubbling,
The whiteness of the sea-foam troubling, 580
If aught his lips essayed to groan
The rushing billows choaked the tone !—

XXVI.

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away—
Few trophies of the fight are there—
The shouts that shook the midnight-bay
Are silent—but some signs of fray
That strand of strife may bear—
And fragments of each shivered brand—
Steps stamped—and dashed into the sand
The print of many a struggling hand 590
May there be marked—nor far remote
A broken torch—an oarless boat—
And tangled on the weeds that heap

The beach where shelving to the deep—

There lies a white Capote !

'Tis rent in twain—one dark-red stain

The wave yet ripples o'er in vain—

But where is he who wore ?

Ye! who would o'er his relics weep

Go—seek them where the surges sweep

600

Their burthen round Sigæum's steep

And cast on Lemnos' shore :

The sea-birds shriek above the prey,

O'er which their hungry beaks delay—

As shaken on his restless pillow,

His head heaves with the heaving billow—

That hand—whose motion is not life—

Yet feebly seems to menace strife—

Flung by the tossing tide on high,

Then levelled with the wave—

610

What recks it? though that corse shall lie

Within a living grave?

The bird that tears that prostrate form

Hath only robbed the meaner worm !

The only heart—the only eye—

Had bled or wept to see him die,

Had seen those scattered limbs composed,
 And mourned above his turban-stone—⁴⁰
 That heart hath burst—that eye was closed—
 Yea—closed before his own!

620

XXVII.

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!
 And woman's eye is wet—man's cheek is pale—
 Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,
 Thy destin'd lord is come too late—
 He sees not—ne'er shall see thy face!—
 Can he not hear
 The loud Wul-wulleh ⁴¹ warn his distant ear?
 Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,
 The Koran-chaunters of the hymn of fate—
 The silent slaves with folded arms that wait,
 Sighs in the hall—and shrieks upon the gale,
 Tell him thy tale!
 Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!
 That fearful moment when he left the cave
 —Thy heart grew chill—
 He was thy hope—thy joy—thy love—thine all—

630

And that last thought on him thou could'st not save
Sufficed to kill—
Burst forth in one wild cry—and all was still—
Peace to thy broken heart—and virgin grave! 640
Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst,
That grief—though deep—though fatal—was thy first!
Thrice happy! ne'er to feel nor fear the force
Of absence—shame—pride—hate—revenge—remorse!
And, oh! that pang where more than Madness lies—
The Worm that will not sleep—and never dies—
Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,
That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light—
That winds around, and tears the quiv'ring heart—
Ah! wherefore not consume it—and depart! 650

Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief!
Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy head—
Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs dost spread:
By that same hand Abdallah—Selim bled—
Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief—
Thy pride of heart—thy bride for Osman's bed—

She—whom thy sultan had but seen to wed—

Thy Daughter's dead!

Hope of thine age—thy twilight's lonely beam—

The Star hath set that shone on Helle's stream— 660

What quench'd its ray?—the blood that thou hast shed!

Hark—to the hurried question of Despair!

“Where is my child?”—an Echo answers—“Where?”⁴²

XXVIII.

Within the place of thousand tombs

That shine beneath, while dark above

The sad but living cypress glooms

And withers not, though branch and leaf

Are stamped with an eternal grief;

Like early unrequited Love!

One spot exists—which ever blooms, 670

Ev'n in that deadly grove.—

A single rose is shedding there

It's lonely lustre, meek and pale,

It looks as planted by Despair—

So white—so faint—the slightest gale

Might whirl the leaves on high;

And yet, though storms and blight assail,
And hands more rude than wintry sky
May wring it from the stem—in vain—
To-morrow sees it bloom again! 680
The stalk some spirit gently rears,
And waters with celestial tears.
For well may maids of Helle deem
That this can be no earthly flower,
Which mocks the tempest's withering hour
And buds unsheltered by a bower,
Nor droops—though spring refuse her shower
Nor woos the summer beam.—
To it the livelong night there sings
A bird unseen—but not remote— 690
Invisible his airy wings,
But soft as harp that Houri strings
His long entrancing note!
It were the Bulbul—but his throat,
Though mournful, pours not such a strain;
For they who listen cannot leave
The spot, but linger there and grieve
As if they loved in vain!

And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
'Tis sorrow so unmixed with dread, 700
They scarce can bear the morn to break
That melancholy spell,

And longer yet would weep and wake,
He sings so wild and well!
But when the day-blush bursts from high—
Expires that magic melody.

And some have been who could believe,
(So fondly youthful dreams deceive,
Yet harsh be they that blame,)
That note so piercing and profound 710
Will shape and syllable its sound
Into Zuleika's name.⁴³

'Tis from her cypress' summit heard,
That melts in air the liquid word—
'Tis from her lowly virgin earth
That white rose takes its tender birth.
There late was laid a marble stone,
Eve saw it placed—the Morrow gone!
It was no mortal arm that bore
That deep-fixed pillar to the shore ; 720

For there, as Helle's legends tell,
Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell—
Lashed by the tumbling tide, whose wave
Denied his bones a holier grave—
And there by night, reclin'd, 'tis said,
Is seen a ghastly turban'd head—
And hence extended by the billow,
'Tis named the "Pirate-phantom's pillow!"
Where first it lay—that mourning flower
Hath flourished—flourisheth this hour—
Alone—and dewy—coldly pure and pale—
As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's tale!

730

NOTES.

Note 1, page 1, line 8.

Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl in her bloom.

“Gúl,” the rose.

Turkish for a Rose

Note 2, page 2, line 2.

Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?

“Souls made of fire, and children of the Sun,

“With whom Revenge is Virtue.

YOUNG'S REVENGE.

Note 3, page 4, line 16.

With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song.

Mejnoun and Leila, the Romeo and Juliet of the East. Sadi, the moral poet of Persia.

Note 4, page 4, line 17.

Till I, who heard the deep tambour.

Tambour, Turkish drum, which sounds at sunrise, noon, and twilight.

Note 5, page 8, line 3.

He is an Arab to my sight.

The Turks abhor the Arabs (who return the compliment a hundred fold) even more than they hate the Christians.

Note 6, page 9, line 18.

The mind—the Music breathing from her face.

This expression has met with objections. I will not refer to “Him who hath not Music in his soul,” but merely request the reader to recollect, for ten seconds, the features of the woman whom he believes to be the most beautiful; and if he then does not comprehend fully what is feebly expressed in the above line, I shall be sorry for us both. For an eloquent passage in the latest work of the first female writer of this, perhaps, of any age, on the analogy (and the immediate comparison excited by that analogy) between “painting and music,” see vol. iii. cap. 10. DE L’ALLEMAGNE. And is not this connexion still stronger with the original than the copy? With the colouring of Nature than of Art? After all, this is rather to be felt than described; still I think there are some who will understand it, at least they would have done had they beheld the countenance whose speaking harmony suggested the idea; for this passage is not drawn from imagination but memory, that mirror which Affliction dashes to the earth, and looking down upon the fragments, only beholds the reflection multiplied!

Note 7, page 10, line 20.

But yet the line of Carasman.

Carasman Oglou, or Kara Osman Oglou, is the principal landholder in Turkey, he governs Magnesia; those, who by a kind of feudal tenure, possess land on condition of service, are called Timariots: they serve as Spahis, according to the extent of territory, and bring a certain number into the field, generally cavalry.

Note 8, page 11, line 11.

And teach the messenger what fate.

When a Pacha is sufficiently strong to resist, the single messenger, who is always the first bearer of the order for his death, is strangled instead, and sometimes five or six, one after the other, on the same errand, by command of the refractory patient; if, on the contrary, he is weak or loyal, he bows, kisses the Sultan's respectable signature, and is bowstrung with great complacency. In 1810, several of these presents were exhibited in the niche of the Seraglio gate; among others, the head of the Pacha of Bagdat, a brave young man, cut off by treachery, after a desperate resistance,

Note 9, page 12, line 10.

Thrice clapped his hands, and called his steed.

Clapping of the hands calls the servants. The Turks hate a superfluous expenditure of voice, and they have no bells.

Note 10, page 12, line 11.

Resign'd his gem-adorned Chibouque.

Chibouque, the Turkish pipe, of which the amber mouth-piece, and sometimes the ball which contains the leaf, is adorned with precious stones, if in possession of the wealthier orders.

Note 11, page 12, line 13.

With Maugrabee—and Mamaluke.

Maugrabee, Moorish mercenaries.

Note 12, page 12, line 14.

His way amid his Delis took.

Deli, bravos who form the forlorn hope of the cavalry, and always begin the action.

Note 13, page 13, line 6.

Careering cleave the folded felt.

A twisted fold of *felt* is used for scimitar practice by the Turks, and few but Mussulman arms can cut through it at a single stroke: sometimes a tough turban is used for the same purpose. The *jerreed* is a game of blunt javelins, animated and graceful.

Note 14, page 13, line 9.

Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud.

“Ollahs,” *Alla il Allah*, the “Leilies,” as the Spanish poets call them, the sound is *Ollah*; a cry of which the Turks, for a silent people, are somewhat profuse, particularly during the *jerreed*, or in the chase, but mostly in battle. Their animation in the field, and gravity in the chamber, with their pipes and *comboloios*, form an amusing contrast.

Note 15, page 14, line 8.

The Persian Atar-gul's perfume.

“Atar-gul,” *ottar* of roses. The Persian is the finest.

Note 16, page 14, line 10.

The pictured roof and marble floor.

The ceiling and wainscots, or rather walls, of the Mussulman apartments are generally painted, in great houses, with one eter-

nal and highly coloured view of Constantinople, wherein the principal feature is a noble contempt of perspective ; below, arms, scimitars, &c. are in general fancifully and not inelegantly disposed.

Note 17, page 15, line 4.

A message from the Bulbul bears.

It has been much doubted whether the notes of this “ Lover of the rose ” are sad or merry ; and Mr. Fox’s remarks on the subject have provoked some learned controversy as to the opinions of the ancients on the subject. I dare not venture a conjecture on the point, though a little inclined to the “ *errare mallet*,” &c. if Mr. Fox was mistaken.

Note 18, page 16, line 19.

Even Azrael from his deadly quiver.

“ Azrael ”—the angel of death.

Note 19, page 18, line 12.

Within the caves of Istakar.

The treasures of the Preadamite Sultans. See D’HERBELOT, article *Istakar*.

Note 20, page 19, line 6.

Holds not a Musselim’s control.

Musselim, a governor, the next in rank after a Pacha ; a Waywode is the third ; and then come the Agas.

Note 21, page 19, line 7.

Was he not bred in Egripo.

Egripo—the Negropont. According to the proverb, the Turks of Egripo, the Jews of Salonica, and the Greeks of Athens, are the worst of their respective races.

Note 22, page 22, line 17.

Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar.

“Tchocadar”—one of the attendants who precedes a man of authority.

Note 23, page 27, line 4.

Thine own “broad Hellespont” still dashes.

The wrangling about this epithet, “the broad Hellespont” or the “boundless Hellespont,” whether it means one or the other, or what it means at all, has been beyond all possibility of detail. I have even heard it disputed on the spot; and not foreseeing a speedy conclusion to the controversy, amused myself with swimming across it in the mean time, and probably may again, before the point is settled. Indeed, the question as to the truth of “the tale of Troy divine” still continues, much of it resting upon the talismanic word “*απειρος* :” probably Homer had the same notion of distance that a coquette has of time, and when he talks of boundless, means half a mile; as the latter, by a like figure, when she says *eternal* attachment, simply specifies three weeks.

Note 24, page 27, line 15.

Which Ammon's son ran proudly round.

Before his Persian invasion, and crowned the altar with laurel, &c. He was afterwards imitated by Caracalla in his race. It is believed that the last also poisoned a friend, named Festus, for the sake of new Patroclan games. I have seen the sheep feeding on the tombs of Æsietes and Antilochus; the first is in the centre of the plain.

Note 25, page 28, line 14.

O'er which her fairy fingers ran.

When rubbed, the amber is susceptible of a perfume, which is slight but not disagreeable.

Note 26, page 28, line 17.

Her mother's sainted amulet.

The belief in amulets engraved on gems, or enclosed in gold boxes, containing scraps from the Koran, worn round the neck, wrist, or arm, is still universal in the East. The Koorsee (throne) verse in the second cap. of the Koran describes the attributes of the Most High, and is engraved in this manner, and worn by the pious, as the most esteemed and sublime of all sentences.

Note 27, page 29, line 1.

And by her Comboloio lies.

“Comboloio”—a Turkish rosary. The MSS., particularly

those of the Persians, are richly adorned and illuminated. The Greek females are kept in utter ignorance; but many of the Turkish girls are highly accomplished, though not actually qualified for a Christian coterie; perhaps some of our own "*blues*" might not be the worse for *bleaching*.

Note 28, page 32, line 20.

In him was some young Galiongée.

"Galiongée"—or Galiongi, a sailor, that is, a *Turkish* sailor; the Greeks navigate, the Turks work the guns. Their dress is picturesque; and I have seen the Capitan Pacha more than once wearing it as a kind of *incog*. Their legs, however, are generally naked. The buskins described in the text as sheathed behind with silver, are those of an Arnaut robber, who was my host (he had quitted the profession), at his Pyrgo, near Gastouni in the Morea; they were plated in scales one over the other, like the back of an armadillo.

Note 29, page 35, line 1.

So may the Koran verse displayed.

The characters on all Turkish scimitars contain sometimes the name of the place of their manufacture, but more generally a text from the Koran, in letters of gold. Amongst those in my possession is one with a blade of singular construction; it is very broad, and the edge notched into serpentine curves like the ripple of water, or the wavering of flame. I asked the Armenian who sold it, what possible use such a figure could add: he said, in Italian, that he did not know; but the Mussulmans had an idea

that those of this form gave a severer wound; and liked it because it was “*piu feroce.*” I did not much admire the reason, but bought it for its peculiarity.

Note 30, page 35, line 16.

But like the nephew of a Cain.

It is to be observed, that every allusion to any thing or personage in the Old Testament, such as the Ark, or Cain, is equally the privilege of Mussulman and Jew; indeed the former profess to be much better acquainted with the lives, true and fabulous, of the patriarchs, than is warranted by our own Sacred writ, and not content with Adam, they have a biography of Pre-Adamites. Solomon is the monarch of all necromancy, and Moses a prophet inferior only to Christ and Mahomet. Zuleika is the Persian name of Potiphar's wife, and her amour with Joseph constitutes one of the finest poems in their language. It is therefore no violation of costume to put the names of Cain, or Noah, into the mouth of a Moslem.

Note 31, page 36, line 10.

And Paswan's rebel hordes attest.

Paswan Oglou, the rebel of Widin, who for the last years of his life set the whole power of the Porte at defiance.

Note 32, page 37, line 3.

They gave their horsetails to the wind.

Horsetail, the standard of a Pacha.

Note 33, page 37, line 16.

He drank one draught—nor needed more!

Giaffir, Pacha of Argyro Castro, or Scutari, I am not sure which, was actually taken off by the Albanian Ali, in the manner described in the text. Ali Pacha, while I was in the country, married the daughter of his victim, some years after the event had taken place at a bath in Sophia, or Adrianople. The poison was mixed in the cup of coffee, which is presented before the sherbet by the bath-keeper, after dressing.

Note 34, page 43, line 5.

I sought by turns, and saw them all.

The Turkish notions of almost all islands are confined to the Archipelago, the sea alluded to.

Note 35, page 44, line 6.

The last of Lambro's patriots there.

Lambro Canzani, a Greek, famous for his efforts in 1789—90 for the independence of his country; abandoned by the Russians he became a pirate, and the Archipelago was the scene of his enterprizes. He is said to be still alive at Petersburg. He and Riga are the two most celebrated of the Greek revolutionists.

Note 36, page 44, line 10.

To snatch the Rayahs from their fate.

“Rayahs,” all who pay the capitation tax, called the “Haratch.”

Note 37, page 44, line 14.

Ay! let me like the ocean-Patriarch roam.

This first of voyages is one of the few with which the Mussulmans profess much acquaintance.

Note 38, page 44, line 15.

Or only know on land the Tartar's home.

The wandering life of the Arabs, Tartars, and Turkomans, will be found well detailed in any book of Eastern travels. That it possesses a charm peculiar to itself cannot be denied. A young French renegado confessed to Chateaubriand, that he never found himself alone, galloping in the desert, without a sensation approaching to rapture, which was indescribable.

Note 39, page 45, line 12.

Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.

"Jannat al Aden," the perpetual abode, the Mussulman Paradise.

Note 40, page 55, line 2.

And mourned above his turban-stone.

A turban is carved in stone above the graves of *men* only.

Note 41, page 55, line 11.

The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant ear.

The death-song of the Turkish women. The "silent slaves" are the men whose notions of decorum forbid complaint in *public*.

Note 42, page 57, line 663.

“ *Where is my child?* ”—*an Echo answers*—“ *Where?* ”

“ I came to the place of my birth and cried, ‘ The friends of
“ my youth, where are they?’ and an Echo answered, ‘ Where
“ are they?’ ” *From an Arabic MS.*

The above quotation (from which the idea in the text is taken) must be already familiar to every reader—it is given in the first annotation, page 67, of “ *The Pleasures of Memory* ;” a poem so well known as to render a reference almost superfluous ; but to whose pages all will be delighted to recur.

Note 43, page 59, line 12.

Into Zuleika’s name.

“ And airy tongues that *syllable* men’s names.”

MILTON.

For a belief that the souls of the dead inhabit the form of birds, we need not travel to the East. Lord Lyttleton’s ghost story, the belief of the Duchess of Kendal, that George II. flew into her window in the shape of a raven (see Orford’s *Reminiscences*), and many other instances, bring this superstition nearer home. The most singular was the whim of a Worcester lady, who believing her daughter to exist in the shape of a singing bird, literally furnished her pew in the Cathedral with cages-full of the kind ; and as she was rich, and a benefactress in beautifying the church, no objection was made to her harmless folly.—For this anecdote, see Orford’s *Letters*.

T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London.

THE CORSAIR,

A TALE.

BY LORD BYRON.

“ ——— I suoi pensieri in lui dormir non ponno.”

TASSO, *Canto decimo, Gerusalemme Liberata.*

FIFTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET;

By Thomas Davison, Whitefriars.

1814.

THE CORSAIR,

A TALE.

BY LORD BYRON.

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, RICHMOND-STREET.

By Thomas Dutton, Whitechapel, London.

TO

THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

MY DEAR MOORE,

I DEDICATE to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years ; and I own that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest and only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name, consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots—while you stand alone the first of her bards in her estimation, and Britain repeats and ratifies the

decree—permit one, whose only regret, since our first acquaintance, has been the years he had lost before it commenced, to add the humble, but sincere suffrage of friendship, to the voice of more than one nation. It will at least prove to you, that I have neither forgotten the gratification derived from your society, nor abandoned the prospect of its renewal, whenever your leisure or inclination allows you to atone to your friends for too long an absence. It is said among those friends, I trust truly, that you are engaged in the composition of a poem whose scene will be laid in the East ; none can do those scenes so much justice. The wrongs of your own country, the magnificent and fiery spirit of her sons, the beauty and feeling of her daughters, may there be found ; and Collins, when

he denominated his Oriental, his Irish Eclogues, was not aware how true, at least, was a part of his parallel. Your imagination will create a warmer sun, and less clouded sky; but wildness, tenderness, and originality are part of your national claim of oriental descent, to which you have already thus far proved your title more clearly than the most zealous of your country's antiquarians. May I add a few words on a subject on which all men are supposed to be fluent, and none agreeable?—Self. I have written much, and published more than enough to demand a longer silence than I now meditate; but for some years to come it is my intention to tempt no further the award of “Gods, men, nor columns.” In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult, but, perhaps, the best

adapted measure to our language, the good old and now neglected heroic couplet:—the stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative; though, I confess, it is the measure most after my own heart; and Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octo-syllabic verse; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius. In blank verse, Milton, Thomson, and our dramatists, are the beacons that shine along the deep, but warn us from the rough and barren rock on which they are kindled. The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure certainly; but as I did not deviate into the other from a wish to flatter what is called public opinion, I shall quit it without further apology, and

take my chance once more with that versification, in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present and will be of my future regret.

With regard to my story, and stories in general, I should have been glad to have rendered my personages more perfect and amiable, if possible, inasmuch as I have been sometimes criticised, and considered no less responsible for their deeds and qualities than if all had been personal. Be it so—if I have deviated into the gloomy vanity of “drawing from self,” the pictures are probably like, since they are unfavourable; and if not, those who know me are undeceived, and those who do not, I have little interest in undeceiving.

I have no particular desire that any but my acquaintance should think the author better than the beings of his imagining; but I cannot help a little surprise, and perhaps amusement, at some odd critical exceptions in the present instance, when I see several bards (far more deserving, I allow) in very reputable plight, and quite exempted from all participation in the faults of those heroes, who, nevertheless, might be found with little more morality than “The Giaour,” and perhaps—but no—I must admit Childe Harold to be a very repulsive personage; and as to his identity, those who like it must give him whatever “alias” they please.

If, however, it were worth while to remove the impression, it might be of some service to

me, that the man who is alike the delight of his readers and his friends—the poet of all circles—and the idol of his own, permits me here and elsewhere to subscribe myself,

most truly,

and affectionately,

his obedient servant,

BYRON.

January 2, 1814.

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THE CORSAIR,

A TALE.

CANTO I.

“ ————— nessun maggior dolore,
“ Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
“ Nella miseria, ————— ”

DANTE.

I.

“ O’ER the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
“ Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
“ Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
“ Survey our empire and behold our home !
“ These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
“ Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.
“ Ours the wild life in tumult still to range
“ From toil to rest, and joy in every change.
“ Oh, who can tell? not thou, luxurious slave!
“ Whose soul would sicken o’er the heaving wave; ” 10

- “ Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease !
“ Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure cannot please—
“ Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,
“ And danc’d in triumph o’er the waters wide,
“ The exulting sense—the pulse’s maddening play,
“ That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way ?
“ That for itself can woo the approaching fight,
“ And turn what some deem danger to delight ;
“ That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,
“ And where the feebler faint—can only feel— 20
“ Feel—to the rising bosom’s inmost core,
“ Its hope awaken and its spirit soar ?
“ No dread of death—if with us die our foes—
“ Save that it seems even duller than repose :
“ Come when it will—we snatch the life of life—
“ When lost—what recks it—by disease or strife ?
“ Let him who crawls enamoured of decay,
“ Cling to his couch, and sicken years away ;
“ Heave his thick breath ; and shake his palsied head ;
“ Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed. 30
“ While gasp by gasp he falters forth his soul,
“ Ours with one pang—one bound—escapes controul.

“ His corse may boast it's urn and narrow cave,

“ And they who loath'd his life may gild his grave :

“ Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,

“ When Ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.

“ For us, even banquets fond regret supply

“ In the red cup that crowns our memory ;

“ And the brief epitaph in danger's day,

“ When those who win at length divide the prey, 40

“ And cry, Remembrance saddening o'er each brow,

“ How had the brave who fell exulted *now* !”

II.

Such were the notes that from the Pirate's isle,

Around the kindling watch-fire rang the while ;

Such were the sounds that thrill'd the rocks along,

And unto ears as rugged seem'd a song !

In scattered groupings upon the golden sand,

They game—carouse—converse—or whet the brand ;

Select the arms—to each his blade assign,

And careless eye the blood that dims its shine : 50

Repair the boat—replace the helm or oar,

While others straggling muse along the shore ;

For the wild bird the busy springes set,
Or spread beneath the sun the dripping net :
Gaze where some distant sail a speck supplies,
With all the thirsting eye of Enterprize—
Tell o'er the tales of many a night of toil,
And marvel where they next shall seize a spoil :
No matter where—their chief's allotment this—
Theirs—to believe no prey nor plan amiss. 60
But who that CHIEF? his name on every shore
Is famed and fear'd—they ask and know no more.
With these he mingles not but to command—
Few are his words, but keen his eye and hand.
Ne'er seasons he with mirth their jovial mess,
But they forgive his silence for success.
Ne'er for his lip the purpling cup they fill,
That goblet passes him untasted still—
And for his fare—the rudest of his crew
Would that, in turn, have pass'd untasted too ; 70
Earth's coarsest bread, the garden's homeliest roots,
And scarce the summer luxury of fruits,
His short repast in humbleness supply
With all a hermit's board would scarce deny.

But while he shuns the grosser joys of sense,
His mind seems nourish'd by that abstinence.
“Steer to that shore!”—they sail. “Do this!”—’tis done :
“Now form and follow me!”—the spoil is won.
Thus prompt his accents and his actions still,
And all obey and few enquire his will ; 80
To such, brief answer and contemptuous eye
Convey reproof, nor further deign reply.

III.

“A sail!—a sail!”—a promised prize to Hope!
Her nation—flag—how speaks the telescope?
No prize, alas!—but yet a welcome sail :
The blood-red signal glitters in the gale.
Yes—she is our’s—a home returning bark—
Blow fair, thou breeze!—she anchors ere the dark.
Already doubled is the cape—our bay
Receives that prow which proudly spurns the spray ; 90
How gloriously her gallant course she goes!
Her white wings flying—never from her foes.
She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife—

Who would not brave the battle-fire—the wreck—
To move the monarch of her peopled deck?

IV.

Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings;
The sails are furl'd; and anchoring round she swings:
And gathering loiterers on the land discern
Her boat descending from the latticed stern. 100
'Tis mann'd—the oars keep concert to the strand,
Till grates her keel upon the shallow sand.
Hail to the welcome shout!—the friendly speech!
When hand grasps hand uniting on the beach;
The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
And the heart's promise of festivity!

V.

The tidings spread—and gathering grows the crowd:
The hum of voices—and the laughter loud,
And woman's gentler anxious tone is heard— 109
Friends'—husbands'—lovers' names in each dear word.
“Oh! are they safe? we ask not of success—
“But shall we see them? will their accents bless?

“ From where the battle roars—the billows chafe—

“ They doubtless boldly did—but who are safe?

“ Here let them haste to gladden and surprize,

“ And kiss the doubt from these delighted eyes!”

VI.

“ Where is our chief? for him we bear report—

“ And doubt that joy—which hails our coming—short,

“ Yet thus sincere—’tis cheering, though so brief;

“ But, Juan! instant guide us to our chief: 120

“ Our greeting paid, we’ll feast on our return,

“ And all shall hear what each may wish to learn.”

Ascending slowly by the rock-hewn way,

To where his watch-tower beetles o’er the bay,

By bushy brake, and wild flowers blossoming,

And freshness breathing from each silver spring,

Whose scattered streams from granite basins burst,

Leap into life, and sparkling woo your thirst;

From crag to cliff they mount—Near yonder cave,

What lonely straggler looks along the wave? 130

In pensive posture leaning on the brand,

Not oft a resting-staff to that red hand?

“ ’Tis he—’tis Conrad—here—as wont—alone,
“ On—Juan! on—and make our purpose known.
“ The bark he views—and tell him we would greet
“ His ear with tidings he must quickly meet :
“ We dare not yet approach—thou know’st his mood,
“ When strange or uninvited steps intrude.”

VII.

Him Juan sought, and told of their intent—
He spake not—but a sign express’d assent. 140
These Juan calls—they come—to their salute
He bends him slightly, but his lips are mute.
“ These letters, chief, are from the Greek—the spy—
“ Who still proclaims our spoil or peril nigh ;
“ Whate’er his tidings, we can well report,
“ Much that”—“Peace, peace!”—he cuts their prating short.
Wondering they turn—abashed—while each to each
Conjecture whispers in his muttering speech :
They watch his glance with many a stealing look,
To gather how that eye the tidings took ; 150
But—this as if he guess’d—with head aside—
Perchance from some emotion—doubt, or pride—

He read the scroll—" My tablets, Juan, hark—

" Where is Gonsalvo?"

" In the anchored bark."

" There let him stay—to him this order bear.

" Back to your duty—for my course prepare :

" Myself this enterprize to-night will share."

" To-night, Lord Conrad?"

" Ay! at set of sun : 160

" The breeze will freshen when the day is done.

" My corslet—cloak—one hour—and we are gone.

" Sling on thy bugle—see that free from rust,

" My carbine-lock springs worthy of my trust;

" Be the edge sharpen'd of my boarding-brand,

" And give it's guard more room to fit my hand.

" This let the Armourer with speed dispose ;

" Last time—it more fatigued my arm than foes :

" Mark that the signal-gun be duly fired,

" To tell us when the hour of stay's expired." 170

VIII.

They make obeisance, and retire in haste,
Too soon to seek again the watery waste :
Yet they repine not—so that Conrad guides,
And who dare question aught that he decides ?
That man of loneliness and mystery,
Scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh—
Whose name appals the fiercest of his crew,
And tints each swarthy cheek with sallower hue ;
Still sways their souls with that commanding art
That dazzles—leads—yet chills the vulgar heart. 180
What is that spell, that thus his lawless train
Confess and envy—yet oppose in vain ?
What should it be ? that thus their faith can bind ?
The power of Thought—the magic of the Mind !
Linked with success—assumed and kept with skill,
That moulds another's weakness to it's will—
Wields with their hands—but still to these unknown,
Makes even their mightiest deeds appear his own.
Such hath it been—shall be—beneath the sun
The many still must labour for the one ; 190
'Tis Nature's doom—but let the wretch who toils,
Accuse not—hate not—*him* who wears the spoils.

Oh! if he knew the weight of splendid chains,
How light the balance of his humbler pains!

IX.

Unlike the heroes of each ancient race,
Demons in act, but Gods at least in face,
In Conrad's form seems little to admire,
Though his dark eye-brow shades a glance of fire:
Robust but not Herculean—to the sight
No giant frame sets forth his common height; 200
Yet in the whole—who paused to look again,
Saw more than marks the crowd of vulgar men—
They gaze and marvel how—and still confess
That thus it is, but why they cannot guess.
Sun-burnt his cheek—his forehead high and pale,—
The sable curls in wild profusion veil;
And oft perforce his rising lip reveals
The haughtier thought it curbs, but scarce conceals.
Though smooth his voice, and calm his general mien,
Still seems there something he would not have seen: 210
His features' deepening lines and varying hue,
At times attracted, yet perplex'd the view,

As if within that murkiness of mind
Work'd feelings fearful, and yet undefined ;
Such might it be—that none could truly tell—
Too close enquiry his stern glance could quell.
There breathe but few whose aspect could defy
The full encounter of his searching eye ;—
He had the skill, when Cunning's gaze would seek
To probe his heart and watch his changing cheek, 220
At once the observer's purpose to espy,
And on himself roll back his scrutiny,
Lest he to Conrad rather should betray
Some secret thought—than drag that chief's to day.
There was a laughing Devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear ;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled—and Mercy sighed farewell!

X.

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought,
Within—within—'twas there the spirit wrought! 230
Love shows all changes—Hate, Ambition, Guile,
Betray no further than the bitter smile;

The lip's least curl, the lightest paleness thrown
 Along the govern'd aspect, speak alone
 Of deeper passions; and to judge their mien,
 He, who would see, must be himself unseen.
 Then—with the hurried step, the upward eye,
 The clenched hand, the pause of agony,
 That listens, starting, lest the step too near
 Approach intrusive on that mood of fear: 240
 Then—with each feature working from the heart,
 With feelings loosed to strengthen—not depart—
 That rise—convulse—subside—that freeze, or glow,
 Flush in the cheek, or damp upon the brow,
 Then—Stranger! if thou canst, and tremblest not,
 Behold his soul—the rest that soothes his lot!
 Mark—how that lone and blighted bosom sears
 The scathing thought of execrated years!
 Behold—but who hath seen, or e'er shall see,
 Man as himself—the secret spirit free? 250

XI.

Yet was not Conrad thus by Nature sent
 To lead the guilty—guilt's worst instrument—

His soul was changed—before his deeds had driven
Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven.
Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's school,
In words too wise—in conduct *there* a fool—
Too firm to yield—and far too proud to stoop—
Doom'd by his very virtues for a dupe,
He curs'd those virtues as the cause of ill,
And not the traitors who betrayed him still; 260
Nor deem'd that gifts bestowed on better men
Had left him joy, and means to give again.
Fear'd—shunn'd—belied—ere youth had lost her force,
He hated man too much to feel remorse—
And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,
To pay the injuries of some on all.
He knew himself a villain—but he deem'd
The rest no better than the thing he seem'd;
And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid
Those deeds the bolder spirit plainly did. 270
He knew himself detested, but he knew
The hearts that loath'd him crouch'd and dreaded too.
Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt
From all affection and from all contempt:

His name could sadden, and his acts surprize ;
But they that fear'd him dared not to despise :
Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake
The slumbering venom of the folded snake.

XII.

None are all evil—clinging round his heart,
One softer feeling would not yet depart ; 280
Oft could he sneer at others as beguil'd
By passions worthy of a fool or child—
Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,
And even in him it asks the name of Love !
Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged—
Felt but for one from whom he never ranged ;
Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd them by ;
Though many a beauty droop'd in prison'd bower,
None ever sooth'd his most unguarded hour. 290
Yes—it was Love—if thoughts of tenderness,
Tried in temptation, strengthen'd by distress,
Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,
And yet—Oh more than all !—untired by time—

Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile,
 Could render sullen were she ne'er to smile,
 Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent
 On her one murmur of his discontent—
 Which still would meet with joy, with calmness part,
 Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart ; 300
 Which nought remov'd—nor menaced to remove—
 If there be love in mortals—this was love!
 He was a villain—aye—reproaches shower
 On him—but not the passion, nor its power,
 Which only proved, all other virtues gone,
 Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one!

XIII.

He paused a moment—till his hastening men
 Pass'd the first winding downward to the glen.
 “ Strange tidings!—many a peril have I past,
 “ Nor know I why this next appears the last ! 310
 “ Yet so my heart forebodes, but must not fear,
 “ Nor shall my followers find me falter here.
 “ 'Tis rash to meet—but surer death to wait—
 “ Till here they hunt us to undoubted fate,

- “ And, if my plan but hold, and Fortune smile,
“ We’ll furnish mourners for our funeral-pile.
“ Ay—let them slumber—peaceful be their dreams!
“ Morn ne’er awoke them with such brilliant beams
“ As kindle high to-night (but blow, thou breeze!)
“ To warm these slow avengers of the seas. 320
“ Now to Medora—Oh! my sinking heart,
“ Long may her own be lighter than thou art!
“ Yet was I brave—mean boast! where all are brave—
“ Ev’n insects sting for aught they seek to save—
“ This common courage which with brutes we share,
“ That owes its deadliest efforts to despair,
“ Small merit claims—but ’twas my nobler hope
“ To teach my few with numbers still to cope;
“ Long have I led them—not to vainly bleed:
“ No medium now—we perish or succeed! 330
“ So let it be—it irks not me to die;
“ But thus to urge them whence they cannot fly—
“ My lot hath long had little of my care,
“ But chafes my pride thus baffled in the snare:
“ Is this my skill? my craft? to set at last
“ Hope, power, and life upon a single cast?

“ Oh, Fate!—accuse thy folly, not thy fate—

“ She may redeem thee still—nor yet too late.”

XIV.

Thus with himself communion held he—till

He reach'd the summit of his tower-crown'd hill: 340

There at the portal paus'd—for wild and soft

He heard those accents never heard too oft;

Through the high lattice far yet sweet they rung,

And these the notes his bird of beauty sung:

1.

“ Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,

Lonely and lost to light for evermore,

Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,

Then trembles into silence as before.

2.

“ There in its centre—a sepulchral lamp

Burns the slow flame eternal—but unseen; 350

Which not the darkness of despair can damp,

Though vain its ray as it had never been.

3.

“Remember me—Oh! pass not thou my grave
 Without one thought whose relics there recline:
 The only pang my bosom dare not brave,
 Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

4.

“My fondest—faintest—latest—accents hear:
 Grief for the dead not Virtue can reprove;
 Then give me all I ever asked—a tear,
 The first—last—sole reward of so much love!” 360

He pass'd the portal—cross'd the corridore,
 And reach'd the chamber as the strain gave o'er:

“My own Medora—sure thy song is sad—”

“In Conrad's absence wouldst thou have it glad?”

“Without thine ear to listen to my lay,

“Still must my song my thoughts, my soul betray:

“Still must each accent to my bosom suit,

“My heart unhush'd—although my lips were mute!

“Oh! many a night on this lone couch reclin'd, 369

“My dreaming fear with storms hath wing'd the wind,

“ And deem’d the breath that faintly fann’d thy sail—
“ The murmuring prelude of the ruder gale ;
“ Though soft—it seem’d the low prophetic dirge,
“ That mourn’d thee floating on the savage surge :
“ Still would I rise—to rouse the beacon fire,
“ Lest spies less true should let the blaze expire ;
“ And many a restless hour outwatch’d each star,
“ And morning came—and still thou wert afar.
“ Oh! how the chill blast on my bosom blew,
“ And day broke dreary on my troubled view, 380
“ And still I gazed and gazed—and not a prow
“ Was granted to my tears—my truth—my vow !
“ At length—’twas noon—I hail’d and blest the mast
“ That met my sight—it near’d—Alas! it past!
“ Another came—Oh God! ’twas thine at last!
“ Would that those days were over! wilt thou ne’er,
“ My Conrad! learn the joys of peace to share?
“ Sure thou hast more than wealth—and many a home
“ As bright as this invites us not to roam :
“ Thou know’st it is not peril that I fear, 390
“ I only tremble when thou art not here ;
“ Then not for mine—but that far dearer life,
“ Which flies from love and languishes for strife—

“ How strange that heart, to me so tender still,

“ Should war with nature and its better will !”

“ Yea, strange indeed—that heart hath long been changed,

“ Worm-like ’twas trampled—adder-like avenged,

“ Without one hope on earth beyond thy love,

“ And scarce a glimpse of mercy from above.

“ Yet the same feeling which thou dost condemn, 400

“ My very love to thee is hate to them,

“ So closely mingling here, that disentwin’d,

“ I cease to love thee when I love mankind :

“ Yet dread not this—the proof of all the past

“ Assures the future that my love will last ;

“ But—Oh, Medora ! nerve thy gentler heart,

“ This hour again—but not for long—we part.”

“ This hour we part !—my heart foreboded this.

“ Thus ever fade my fairy dreams of bliss—

“ This hour—it cannot be—this hour away ! 410

“ Yon bark hath hardly anchored in the bay.

“ Her consort still is absent—and her crew

“ Have need of rest before they toil anew ;

- “ My love! thou mock’st my weakness; and would’st steel
“ My breast before the time when it must feel.
“ But trifle now no more with my distress,
“ Such mirth hath less of play than bitterness :
“ Be silent,—Conrad!—dearest—come and share
“ The feast these hands delighted to prepare—
“ Light toil! to cull and dress thy frugal fare! 420
“ See, I have pluck’d the fruit that promised best,
“ And where not sure, perplex’d, but pleased, I guess’d
“ At such as seem’d the fairest: thrice the hill
“ My steps have wound to try the coolest rill;
“ Yes! thy Sherbet to-night will sweetly flow,
“ See how it sparkles in its vase of snow!
“ The grapes’ gay juice thy bosom never cheers—
“ Thou—more than Moslem—when the cup appears—
“ Think not I mean to chide—for I rejoice
“ What others deem a penance is thy choice. 430
“ But come—the board is spread—our silver lamp
“ Is trimm’d, and heeds not the Sirocco’s damp:
“ Then shall my handmaids while the time along,
“ And join with me the dance, or wake the song;
“ Or my guitar, which still thou lov’st to hear,
“ Shall soothe or lull—or, should it vex thine ear,

- “ We’ll turn the tale, by Ariosto told,
“ Of fair Olympia lov’d and left of old.¹
“ Why—thou wert worse than he who broke his vow
“ To that lost damsel, shouldst thou leave me now ; 440
“ Or even that traitor chief—I’ve seen thee smile,
“ When the clear sky showed Ariadne’s Isle,
“ Which I have pointed from these cliffs the while :
“ And thus—half sportive—half in fear—I said,
“ Lest Time should raise that doubt to more than dread,
“ Thus Conrad, too, will quit me for the main :
“ And he deceiv’d me—for—he came again !”
- “ Again—again—and oft again—my love !
“ If there be life below, and hope above,
“ He will return—but now—the moments bring 450
“ The time of parting with redoubled wing :
“ The why—the where—what boots it now to tell ?
“ Since all must end in that wild word—farewell !
“ Yet would I fain—did time allow—disclose—
“ Fear not—these are no formidable foes ;
“ And here shall watch a more than wonted guard,
“ For sudden siege and long defence prepar’d :

“ Nor be thou lonely—though thy lord’s away,
“ Our matrons and thy handmaids with thee stay;
“ And this thy comfort—that, when next we meet, — 460
“ Security shall make repose more sweet:
“ List!—’tis the bugle—Juan shrilly blew—
“ One kiss—one more—another—Oh! Adieu!”

She rose—she sprung—she clung to his embrace,
Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.
He dared not raise to his that deep-blue eye,
That downcast droop’d in tearless agony.
Her long fair hair lay floating o’er his arms,
In all the wildness of dishevelled charms;
Scarce beat that bosom—where his image dwelt— 470
So full—*that* feeling seem’d almost unfelt!
Hark—peals the thunder of the signal-gun!
It told ’twas sunset—and he curs’d that sun.
Again—again—that form he madly press’d,
Which mutely clasp’d—imploringly caress’d!
And tottering to the couch his bride he bore,
One moment gazed—as if to gaze no more—
Felt—that for him earth held but her alone,
Kiss’d her cold forehead—turn’d—is Conrad gone?

XV.

“ And is he gone ? ”—on sudden solitude 480

How oft that fearful question will intrude ?

“ ’Twas but an instant past—and here he stood !

“ And now ”—without the portal’s porch she rush’d—

And then at length her tears in freedom gush’d,

Big—bright—and fast, unknown to her they fell ;

But still her lips refus’d to send—“ Farewell ! ”

For in that word—that fatal word—howe’er

We promise—hope—believe—there breathes despair.

O’er every feature of that still, pale face,

Had sorrow fix’d what time can ne’er erase : 490

The tender blue of that large loving eye

Grew frozen with its gaze on vacancy—

Till—Oh, how far ! it caught a glimpse of him—

And then it flow’d—and phrenzied seem’d to swim

Through those long, dark, and glistening lashes dew’d

With drops of sadness oft to be renew’d.

“ He’s gone ! ”—against her heart that hand is driven,

Convuls’d and quick—then gently raised to heaven ;

She look’d and saw the heaving of the main ;

The white sail set—she dared not look again ; 500

But turn'd with sickening soul within the gate—

“It is no dream—and I am desolate!”

XVI.

From crag to crag descending—swiftly sped

Stern Conrad down, nor once he turn'd his head;

But shrunk whene'er the windings of his way

Forced on his eye what he would not survey—

His lone, but lovely dwelling on the steep,

That hailed him first when homeward from the deep:

And she—the dim and melancholy star,

Whose ray of beauty reach'd him from afar, 510

On her he must not gaze, he must not think,

There he might rest—but on Destruction's brink—

Yet once almost he stopp'd—and nearly gave

His fate to chance, his projects to the wave;

But no—it must not be—a worthy chief

May melt, but not betray to woman's grief.

He sees his bark, he notes how fair the wind,

And sternly gathers all his might of mind:

Again he hurries on—and as he hears

The clang of tumult vibrate on his ears, 520

The busy sounds, the bustle of the shore,
The shout, the signal, and the dashing oar—
As marks his eye the seaboy on the mast,
The anchor's rise, the sails unfurling fast,
The waving kerchiefs of the crowd that urge
That mute adieu to those who stem the surge;
And more than all—his blood-red flag aloft—
He marvell'd how his heart could seem so soft.
Fire in his glance, and wildness in his breast,
He feels of all his former self possest ; 530
He bounds—he flies—until his footsteps reach
The verge where ends the cliff, begins the beach,
There checks his speed ; but pauses less to breathe
The breezy freshness of the deep beneath,
Than there his wonted statelier step renew ;
Nor rush, disturb'd by haste, to vulgar view :
For well had Conrad learn'd to awe the crowd,
By arts that veil, and oft preserve the proud ;
His was the lofty port, the distant mien,
That seems to shun the sight—and awes if seen : 540
The solemn aspect, and the high-born eye,
That checks low mirth, but lacks not courtesy ;

All these he wielded to command assent—
But where he wished to win, so well unbent,
That kindness cancell'd fear in those who heard,
And other's gifts shewed mean beside his word—
When echoed to the heart as from his own,
His deep yet tender melody of tone :
But such was foreign to his wonted mood,
He cared not what he soften'd—but subdued ;— 550
The evil passions of his youth had made
Him value less who loved—than what obeyed.

XVII.

Around him mustering ranged his ready guard.
Before him Juan stands—"Are all prepared?"
"They are—nay more—embarked: the latest boat
"Waits but my chief——"
"My sword, and my capote."
Soon firmly girded on, and lightly slung,
His belt and cloak were o'er his shoulders flung;
"Call Pedro here!" He comes—and Conrad bends,
With all the courtesy he deign'd his friends ; 560

“ Receive these tablets, and peruse with care,
“ Words of high trust, and truth are graven there;
“ Double the guard, and when Anselmo’s bark
“ Arrives, let him alike these orders mark :
“ In three days (serve the breeze) the sun shall shine
“ On our return—till then all peace be thine !”

This said, his brother Pirate’s hand he wrung,
Then to his boat with haughty gesture sprung.
Flash’d the dipt oars, and sparkling with the stroke,
Around the waves’ phosphoric² brightness broke ; 570

They gain the vessel—on the deck he stands.
Shrieks the shrill whistle—ply the busy hands—
He marks how well the ship her helm obeys,
How gallant all her crew—and deigns to praise.
His eyes of pride to young Gonsalvo turn ;
Why doth he start, and inly seem to mourn ?
Alas ! those eyes beheld his rocky tower,
And live a moment o’er the parting hour ;
She—his Medora—did she mark the prow ?
Ah ! never loved he half so much as now ! 580
But much must yet be done ere dawn of day.
Again he mans himself and turns away ;

Down to the cabin with Gonsalvo bends,
And there unfolds his plan—his means—and ends;
Before them burns the lamp, and spreads the chart,
And all that speaks and aids the naval art;
They to the midnight watch protract debate—
To anxious eyes what hour is ever late?
Mean time, the steady breeze serenely blew,
And fast and Falcon-like the vessel flew; 590
Pass'd the high headlands of each clustering isle,
To gain their port—long—long ere morning smile:
And soon the night-glass through the narrow bay
Discovers where the Pacha's galleys lay.
Count they each sail—and mark how there supine
The lights in vain o'er heedless Moslem shine;
Secure—unnoted—Conrad's prow pass'd by,
And anchor'd where his ambush meant to lie;
Screen'd from espial by the jutting cape,
That rears on high its rude fantastic shape. 600
Then rose his band to duty—not from sleep—
Equipp'd for deeds alike on land or deep;
While lean'd their leader o'er the fretting flood,
And calmly talk'd—and yet he talk'd of blood!

END OF CANTO I.

THE CORSAIR.

CANTO II.

“ Conosceste i dubiosi desiri ? ”

DANTE.

I.

IN Coron's bay floats many a Galley light,
Through Coron's lattices the lamps are bright,
For Seyd, the Pacha, gives a feast to-night:
A feast for promised triumph yet to come,
When he shall drag the fetter'd Rovers home;
This hath he sworn by Alla and his sword, 610
And faithful to his firman and his word,
His summon'd prows collect along the coast,
And great the gathering crews—and loud the boast—
Already shared the captives and the prize,
Though far the distant foe they thus despise.

'Tis but to sail—no doubt to-morrow's Sun
Will see the Pirates bound—their haven won!
Mean time the watch may slumber, if they will,
Nor only wake to war, but dreaming kill:
Though all, who can, disperse on shore and seek 620
To flesh their glowing valour on the Greek;
How well such deed becomes the turban'd brave—
To bare the sabre's edge before a slave!
Infest his dwelling—but forbear to slay,
Their arms are strong, yet merciful to-day,
And do not deign to smite because they may!
Unless some gay caprice suggests the blow,
To keep in practice for the coming foe.
Revel and rout the evening hours beguile,
And they who wish to wear a head must smile; 630
For Moslem mouths produce their choicest cheer,
And hoard their curses, till the coast is clear.

II.

High in his hall reclines the turban'd Seyd:
Around—the bearded chiefs he came to lead.
Removed the banquet, and the last pilaff—
Forbidden draughts, 'tis said, he dared to quaff,

Though to the rest the sober berry's juice,³
 The slaves bear round for rigid Moslem's use;
 The long Chibouque's⁴ dissolving cloud supply,
 While dance the Almas⁵ to wild minstrelsy: 640
 The rising morn will view the chiefs embark;
 But waves are somewhat treacherous in the dark:
 And revellers may more securely sleep
 On silken-couch than o'er the rugged deep;
 Feast there who can—nor combat till they must,
 And less to conquest than to Korans trust;
 And yet the numbers crowded in his host
 Might warrant more than even the Pacha's boast.

III.

With cautious reverence from the outer gate,
 Slow stalks the slave, whose office there to wait, 650
 Bows his bent head—his hand salutes the floor,
 Ere yet his tongue the trusted tidings bore:
 “A captive Dervise, from the pirate's nest
 “Escaped, is here—himself would tell the rest.”
 He took the sign from Seyd's assenting eye,
 And led the holy man in silence nigh.

His arms were folded on his dark-green vest,
 His step was feeble, and his look deprest;
 Yet worn he seem'd of hardship more than years,
 And pale his cheek with penance, not from fears, 660
 Vow'd to his God—his sable locks he wore,
 And these his lofty cap rose proudly o'er:
 Around his form his loose long robe was thrown,
 And wrapt a breast bestow'd on heaven alone;
 Submissive, yet with self-possession mann'd,
 He calmly met the curious eyes that scann'd;
 And question of his coming fain would seek,
 Before the Pacha's will allowed to speak,

IV.

“ Whence com'st thou, Dervise?”

“ From the outlaw's den, 670

“ A fugitive—”

“ Thy capture where and when?”

“ From Scalanova's port to Scio's isle,

“ The Saick was bound; but Alla did not smile

“ Upon our course—the Moslem merchant's gains

“ The Rovers won: our limbs have worn their chains,

“ I had no death to fear, nor wealth to boast,

“ Beyond the wandering freedom which I lost ;

“ At length a fisher’s humble boat by night

“ Afforded hope, and offer’d chance of flight :

“ I seized the hour, and find my safety here——— 680

“ With thee—most mighty Pacha ! who can fear ?”

“ How speed the outlaws ? stand they well prepared,

“ Their plunder’d wealth, and robber’s rock, to guard ?

“ Dream they of this our preparation, doom’d

“ To view with fire their scorpion nest consumed ?”

“ Pacha ! the fettered captive’s mourning eye

“ That weeps for flight, but ill can play the spy ;

“ I only heard the reckless waters roar,

“ Those waves that would not bear me from the shore ;

“ I only mark’d the glorious sun and sky, 690

“ Too bright—too blue—for my captivity ;

“ And felt—that all which Freedom’s bosom cheers,

“ Must break my chain before it dried my tears.

“ This may’st thou judge, at least, from my escape,

“ They little deem of aught in peril’s shape ;

“ Else vainly had I prayed or sought the chance
“ That leads me here—if eyed with vigilance :
“ The careless guard that did not see me fly,
“ May watch as idly when thy power is nigh.
“ Pacha!—my limbs are faint—and nature craves 700
“ Food for my hunger, rest from tossing waves ;
“ Permit my absence—peace be with thee ! Peace
“ With all around!—now grant repose—release.”
“ Stay, Dervise ! I have more to question—stay,
“ I do command thee—sit—dost hear?—obey !
“ More I must ask, and food the slaves shall bring ;
“ Thou shalt not pine where all are banqueting :
“ The supper done—prepare thee to reply,
“ Clearly and full—I love not mystery.”
“ Twere vain to guess what shook the pious man, 710
Who look’d not lovingly on that Divan ;
Nor show’d high relish for the banquet prest,
And less respect for every fellow guest.
’Twas but a moment’s peevish hectic past
Along his cheek, and tranquillized as fast :

He sate him down in silence, and his look
Resumed the calmness which before forsook :
The feast was usher'd in—but sumptuous fare
He shunn'd as if some poison mingled there.

For one so long condemn'd to toil and fast, 720
Methinks he strangely spares the rich repast.

“ What ails thee, Dervise ? eat—dost thou suppose

“ This feast a Christian's ? or my friends thy foes ?

“ Why dost thou shun the salt ? that sacred pledge,

“ Which, once partaken, blunts the sabre's edge,

“ Makes even contending tribes in peace unite,

“ And hated hosts seem brethren to the sight !”

“ Salt seasons dainties—and my food is still

“ The humblest root, my drink the simplest rill ;

“ And my stern vow and order's ⁶ laws oppose 730

“ To break or mingle bread with friends or foes ;

“ It may seem strange—if there be aught to dread,

“ That peril rests upon my single head ;

“ But for thy sway—nay more—thy Sultan's throne,

“ I taste nor bread nor banquet—save alone;

“ Infringed our order’s rule, the Prophet’s rage

“ To Mecca’s dome might bar my pilgrimage.”

“ Well—as thou wilt—ascetic as thou art—

“ One question answer ; then in peace depart.

“ How many?—Ha ! it cannot sure be day ? 740

“ What star—what sun is bursting on the bay ?

“ It shines a lake of fire !—away—away !

“ Ho ! treachery ! my guards ! my scimitar !

“ The galleys feed the flames—and I afar !

“ Accursed Dervise !—these thy tidings—thou

“ Some villain spy—seize—cleave him—slay him now !”

Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light,

Nor less his change of form appall’d the sight :

Up rose that Dervise—not in saintly garb,

But like a warrior bounding from his barb, 750

Dash’d his high cap, and tore his robe away—

Shone his mail’d breast, and flash’d his sabre’s ray !

His close but glittering casque, and sable plume,

More glittering eye, and black brow’s sabler gloom,

Glared on the Moslems’ eyes some Afrit sprite,

Whose demon death-blow left no hope for fight.

The wild confusion, and the swarthy glow
Of flames on high, and torches from below ;
The shriek of terror, and the mingling yell—
For swords began to clash, and shouts to swell, 760
Flung o'er that spot of earth the air of hell!
Distracted to and fro the flying slaves
Behold but bloody shore and fiery waves ;
Nought heeded they the Pacha's angry cry,
They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai !
He saw their terror—check'd the first despair
That urged him but to stand and perish there,
Since far too early and too well obey'd,
The flame was kindled ere the signal made ;
He saw their terror—from his baldric drew 770
His bugle—brief the blast—but shrilly blew,
'Tis answer'd—“ Well ye speed, my gallant crew !
“ Why did I doubt their quickness of career ?
“ And deem design had left me single here ?”
Sweeps his long arm—that sabre's whirling sway,
Sheds fast atonement for its first delay ;
Completes his fury, what their fear begun,
And makes the many basely quail to one.

The cloven turbans o'er the chamber spread,
And scarce an arm dare rise to guard its head: 780
Even Seyd, convuls'd, o'erwhelm'd with rage, surprize,
Retreats before him, though he still defies.
No craven he—and yet he dreads the blow,
So much Confusion magnifies his foe!
His blazing galleys still distract his sight,
He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight;
For now the pirates pass'd the Haram gate,
And burst within—and it were death to wait;
Where wild Amazement shrieking—kneeling—throws
The sword aside—in vain—the blood o'erflows! 790
The Corsairs pouring, haste to where within,
Invited Conrad's bugle, and the din
Of groaning victims, and wild cries for life,
Proclaim'd how well he did the work of strife.
They shout to find him grim and lonely there,
A glutted tyger mangling in his lair!
But short their greeting—shorter his reply—
“ 'Tis well—but Seyd escapes—and he must die.

“ Much hath been done—but more remains to do—

“ Their galleys blaze—why not their city too ?” 800

V.

Quick at the word—they seized him each a torch,

And fire the dome from minaret to porch.

A stern delight was fix'd in Conrad's eye,

But sudden sunk—for on his ear the cry

Of women struck, and like a deadly knell

Knock'd at that heart unmoved by battle's yell.

“ Oh ! burst the Haram—wrong not on your lives

“ One female form—remember—we have wives.

“ On them such outrage Vengeance will repay ;

“ Man is our foe, and such 'tis ours to slay : 810

“ But still we spared—must spare the weaker prey.

“ Oh ! I forgot—but Heaven will not forgive

“ If at my word the helpless cease to live ;

“ Follow who will—I go—we yet have time

“ Our souls to lighten of at least a crime.”

He climbs the crackling stair—he bursts the door,

Nor feels his feet glow scorching with the floor ;

His breath choak'd gasping with the volumed smoke,

But still from room to room his way he broke :

They search—they find—they save : with lusty arms 820
Each bears a prize of unregarded charms ;
Calm their loud fears ; sustain their sinking frames
With all the care defenceless beauty claims :
So well could Conrad tame their fiercest mood,
And check the very hands with gore imbrued.
But who is she ? whom Conrad's arms convey
From reeking pile and combat's wreck—away—
Who but the love of him he dooms to bleed ?
The Haram queen—but still the slave of Seyd !

VI.

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare⁹, 830
Few words to reassure the trembling fair ;
For in that pause compassion snatch'd from war,
The foe before retiring, fast and far,
With wonder saw their footsteps unpursued,
First slower fled—then rallied—then withstood.
This Seyd perceives, then first perceives how few,
Compar'd with his, the Corsair's roving crew,
And blushes o'er his error as he eyes
The ruin wrought by panic and surprize.

Alia il Alia ! Vengeance swells the cry— 840
Shame mounts to rage that must atone or die !
And flame for flame and blood for blood must tell,
The tide of triumph ebbs that flowed too well—
When wrath returns to renovated strife,
And those who fought for conquest strike for life.
Conrad beheld the danger—he beheld
His followers faint by freshening foes repelled :
“ One effort—one—to break the circling host ! ”
They form—unite—charge—waver—all is lost !
Within a narrower ring compress'd, beset, 850
Hopeless, not heartless, strive and struggle yet—
Ah ! now they fight in firmest file no more,
Hemm'd in—cut off—cleft down—and trampled o'er ;
But each strikes singly, silently, and home,
And sinks outwearied rather than o'ercome,
His last faint quittance rendering with his breath,
Till the blade glimmers in the grasp of death !

VII.

But first, ere came the rallying host to blows,
And rank to rank, and hand to hand oppose,

Gulnare and all her Haram handmaids freed, 860
Safe in the dome of one who held their creed
By Conrad's mandate safely were bestow'd,
And dried those tears for life and fame that flow'd:
And when that dark-eyed lady, young Gulnare,
Recall'd those thoughts late wandering in despair,
Much did she marvel o'er the courtesy
That smooth'd his accents—soften'd in his eye.
'Twas strange—*that* robber thus with gore bedew'd,
Seem'd gentler then than Seyd in fondest mood.
The Pacha wooed as if he deem'd the slave 870
Must seem delighted with the heart he gave;
The Corsair vowed protection, sooth'd affright,
As if his homage were a woman's right.
“The wish is wrong—nay worse for female—vain:
“Yet much I long to view that chief again;
“If but to thank for, what my fear forgot,
“The life—my loving lord remembered not!”

VIII.

And him she saw, where thickest carnage spread,
But gathered breathing from the happier dead;

Far from his band, and battling with a host 880
That deem right dearly won the field he lost,
Fell'd—bleeding—baffled of the death he sought,
And snatch'd to expiate all the ills he wrought;
Preserved to linger and to live in vain,
While Vengeance ponder'd o'er new plans of pain,
And staunch'd the blood she saves to shed again—
But drop by drop, for Seyd's unglutted eye
Would doom him ever dying—ne'er to die!
Can this be he? triumphant late she saw,
When his red hand's wild gesture waved, a law! 890
'Tis he indeed—disarm'd but undeprest,
His sole regret the life he still possest;
His wounds too slight, though taken with that will,
Which would have kiss'd the hand that then could kill.
Oh were there none, of all the many given,
To send his soul—he scarcely asked to heaven?
Must he alone of all retain his breath,
Who more than all had striv'n and struck for death?
He deeply felt—what mortal hearts must feel;
When thus revers'd on faithless fortune's wheel, 900

For crimes committed, and the victor's threat
 Of lingering tortures to repay the debt --
 He deeply, darkly felt; but evil pride
 That led to perpetrate—now serves to hide.
 Still in his stern and self-collected mien
 A conqueror's more than captive's air is seen,
 Though faint with wasting toil and stiffening wound,
 But few that saw—so calmly gaz'd around :
 Though the far shouting of the distant crowd,
 Their tremors o'er, rose insolently loud, 910
 The better warriors who beheld him near,
 Insulted not the foe who taught them fear—
 And the grim guards that to his durance led,
 In silence eyed him with a secret dread.

IX.

The Leech was sent—but not in mercy—there
 To note how much the life yet left could bear;
 He found enough to load with heaviest chain,
 And promise feeling for the wretch of pain :
 To-morrow—yea—to-morrow's evening sun
 Will sinking see impalement's pangs begun, 920

And rising with the wonted blush of morn
 Behold how well or ill those pangs are borne.
 Of torments this the longest and the worst,
 Which adds all other agony to thirst,
 That day by day death still forbears to slake,
 While famish'd vultures flit around the stake.
 "Oh! water—water!"—smiling Hate denies
 The victim's prayer—for if he drinks—he dies.
 This was his doom:—the Leech, the guard were gone,
 And left proud Conrad fetter'd and alone. 930

X.

'Twere vain to paint to what his feelings grew—
 It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
 There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
 When all its elements convuls'd—combined—
 Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,
 And gnashing with impenitent Remorse;
 That juggling fiend—who never spake before—
 But cries, "I warn'd thee!" when the deed is o'er.
 Vain voice! the spirit burning but unbent,
 May writhe—rebel—the weak alone repent! 940

Even in that lonely hour when most it feels,
And to itself all—all that self reveals,
No single passion, and no ruling thought
That leaves the rest as once unseen, unsought,
But the wild prospect when the soul reviews—
All rushing through their thousand avenues—
Ambition's dreams expiring, love's regret,
Endanger'd glory, life itself beset;
The joy untasted, the contempt or hate
Gainst those who fain would triumph in our fate; 950
The hopeless past—the hasting future driven
Too quickly on to guess if hell or heaven;
Deeds, thoughts, and words, perhaps remembered not
So keenly till that hour, but ne'er forgot;
Things light or lovely in their acted time,
But now to stern reflection each a crime;
The withering sense of evil unreveal'd,
Not cankering less because the more conceal'd—
All—in a word—from which all eyes must start,
That opening sepulchre—the naked heart 960
Bares with its buried woes, till Pride awake,
To snatch the mirror from the soul—and break.

Ay—Pride can veil, and Courage brave it all—
 All—all—before—beyond—the deadliest fall :
 Each hath some fear, and he who least betrays,
 The only hypocrite deserving praise :
 Not the loud recreant wretch who boasts and flies ;
 But he who looks on death—and silent dies :
 So steel'd by pondering o'er his far career,
 He halfway meets him should he menace near ! 970

XI.

In the high chamber of his highest tower,
 Sate Conrad, fetter'd in the Pacha's power.
 His palace perish'd in the flame—this fort
 Contain'd at once his captive and his court.
 Not much could Conrad of his sentence blame,
 His foe, if vanquish'd, had but shared the same :—
 Alone he sate—in solitude had scann'd
 His guilty bosom, but that breast he mann'd :
 One thought alone he could not—dared not meet—
 “ Oh, how these tidings will Medora greet ? ” 980
 Then—only then—his clanking hands he rais'd,
 And strain'd with rage the chain on which he gazed ;

But soon he found—or feign'd—or dream'd relief,
And smil'd in self-derision of his grief,
“And now come torture when it will—or may—
“More need of rest to nerve me for the day!”
This said, with languor to his mat he crept,
And, whatsoe'er his visions, quickly slept.

'Twas hardly midnight when that fray begun,
For Conrad's plans matured, at once were done; 990
And Havoc loathes so much the waste of time,
She scarce had left an uncommitted crime.
One hour beheld him since the tide he stemm'd—
Disguis'd—discover'd—conquering—ta'en—condemn'd—
A chief on land—an outlaw on the deep—
Destroying—saving—prison'd—and asleep!

XII.

He slept in calmest seeming—for his breath
Was hush'd so deep—Ah! happy if in death!
He slept—Who o'er his placid slumber bends?
His foes are gone—and here he hath no friends; 1000
Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace?
No, 'tis an earthly form with heavenly face!

Its white arm rais'd a lamp—yet gently hid,
Lest the ray flash abruptly on the lid
Of that clos'd eye, which opens but to pain,
And once unclosed—but once may close again.
That form, with eye so dark, and cheek so fair,
And auburn waves of gemm'd and braided hair;
With shape of fairy lightness—naked foot,
That shines like snow, and falls on earth as mute— 1010
Through guards and dunnest night how came it there?
Ah! rather ask what will not woman dare?
Whom youth and pity lead like thee, Gulnare!
She could not sleep—and while the Pacha's rest
In muttering dreams yet saw his pirate-guest,
She left his side—his signet ring she bore,
Which oft in sport adorn'd her hand before—
And with it, scarcely question'd, won her way
Through drowsy guards that must that sign obey.
Worn out with toil, and tir'd with changing blows, 1020
Their eyes had envied Conrad his repose;
And chill and nodding at the turret door,
They stretch their listless limbs, and watch no more—
Just raised their heads to hail the signet-ring,
Nor ask or what or who the sign may bring.

XIII.

She gazed in wonder, “ can he calmly sleep,
“ While other eyes his fall or ravage weep?
“ And mine in restlessness are wandering here—
“ What sudden spell hath made this man so dear?
“ True—’tis to him my life, and more, I owe, 1030
“ And me and mine he spared from worse than woe :
“ ’Tis late to think—but soft—his slumber breaks—
“ How heavily he sighs !—he starts—awakes !”

He rais’d his head—and dazzled with the light,
His eye seem’d dubious if it saw aright :
He moved his hand—the grating of his chain
Too harshly told him that he liv’d again.

“ What is that form ? if not a shape of air,
“ Methinks, my jailor’s face shows wond’rous fair !”

“ Pirate ! thou know’st me not—but I am one, 1040
“ Grateful for deeds thou hast too rarely done ;
“ Look on me—and remember her, thy hand
“ Snatch’d from the flames, and thy more fearful band.

“ I come through darkness—and I scarce know why—

“ Yet not to hurt—I would not see thee die.”

“ If so, kind lady! thine the only eye

“ That would not here in that gay hope delight :

“ Theirs is the chance—and let them use their right.

“ But still I thank their courtesy or thine,

“ That would confess me at so fair a shrine!” 1050

Strange though it seem—yet with extremest grief

Is link'd a mirth—it doth not bring relief—

That playfulness of Sorrow ne'er beguiles,

And smiles in bitterness—but still it smiles—

And sometimes with the wisest and the best,

Till even the scaffold¹⁰ echoes with their jest!

Yet not the joy to which it seems akin—

It may deceive all hearts, save that within.

Whate'er it was that flash'd on Conrad, now

A laughing wildness half unbent his brow : 1060

And these his accents had a sound of mirth,

As if the last he could enjoy on earth ;

Yet 'gainst his nature—for through that short life,
Few thoughts had he to spare from gloom and strife.

XIV.

“ Corsair! thy doom is named—but I have power
“ To soothe the Pacha in his weaker hour.
“ Thee would I spare—nay more—would save thee now,
“ But this—time—hope—nor even thy strength allow;
“ But all I can, I will : at least, delay
“ The sentence that remits thee scarce a day. 1070
“ More now were ruin—even thyself were loth
“ The vain attempt should bring but doom to both.”
“ Yes!—loth indeed:—my soul is nerv'd to all,
“ Or fall'n too low to fear a further fall:
“ Tempt not thyself with peril—me with hope,
“ Of flight from foes with whom I could not cope;
“ Unfit to vanquish—shall I meanly fly,
“ The one of all my band that would not die?—
“ Yet there is one—to whom my memory clings,
“ 'Till to these eyes her own wild softness springs. 1080

- “ My sole resources in the path I trod
“ Were these—my bark—my sword—my love—my God!
“ The last I left in youth—he leaves me now—
“ And Man but works his will to lay me low.
“ I have no thought to mock his throne with prayer
“ Wrung from the coward crouching of despair,
“ It is enough—I breathe—and I can bear.
“ My sword is shaken from the worthless hand
“ That might have better kept so true a brand;
“ My bark is sunk or captive—but my love— 1090
“ For her in sooth my voice would mount above:
“ Oh! she is all that still to earth can bind—
“ And this will break a heart so more than kind,
“ And blight a form—till thine appeared, Gulnare!
“ Mine eye ne’er ask’d if others were as fair?”
“ Thou lov’st another then?—but what to me
“ Is this—’tis nothing—nothing e’er can be:
“ But yet—thou lov’st—and—Oh! I envy those
“ Whose hearts on hearts as faithful can repose,
“ Who never feel the void—the wandering thought 1100
“ That sighs o’er visions—such as mine hath wrought.”

“ Lady—methought thy love was his, for whom

“ This arm redeem’d thee from a fiery tomb.”

“ My love stern Seyd’s? Oh—No—No—not my love—

“ Yet much this heart, that strives no more, once strove

“ To meet his passion—but it would not be.

“ I felt—I feel—love dwells with—with the free.

“ I am a slave, a favoured slave at best,

“ To share his splendour, and seem very blest!

“ Oft must my soul the question undergo, 1110

“ Of— Dost thou love?” and burn to answer ‘No!’

“ Oh! hard it is that fondness to sustain,

“ And struggle not to feel averse in vain;

“ But harder still the heart’s recoil to bear,

“ And hide from one—perhaps another there.

“ He takes the hand I give not—nor withhold—

“ Its pulse nor check’d—nor quicken’d—calmly cold:

“ And when he quits—it drops a lifeless weight

“ From one I never loved enough to hate.

“ No warmth these lips return by his imprest, 1120

“ And chill’d remembrance shudders o’er the rest.

“ Yes—had I ever proved that passion’s zeal,
“ The change to hatred were at least to feel :
“ But still—he goes unmourn’d—returns unsought—
“ And oft when present—absent from my thought.
“ Or when reflection comes, and come it must—
“ I fear that henceforth ’twill but bring disgust;
“ I am his slave—but, in despite of pride,
“ ’Twere worse than bondage to become his bride.
“ Oh! that this dotage of his breast would cease! 1130
“ Or seek another and give mine release,
“ But yesterday—I could have said, to peace!
“ Yes—if unwonted fondness now I feign,
“ Remember—captive ! ’tis to break thy chain.
“ Repay the life that to thy hand I owe;
“ To give thee back to all endear’d below,
“ Who share such love as I can never know.
“ Farewell—morn breaks—and I must now away :
“ ’Twill cost me dear—but dread no death to-day!

XV.

She press’d his fetter’d fingers to her heart, 1140
And bow’d her head, and turn’d her to depart,

And noiseless as a lovely dream is gone.
And was she here? and is he now alone?
What gem hath dropp'd and sparkles o'er his chain?
The tear most sacred—shed for others' pain—
That starts at once—bright—pure—from Pity's mine,
Already polish'd by the hand divine!

Oh! too convincing—dangerously dear—
In woman's eye the unanswerable tear!
That weapon of her weakness she can wield, 1150
To save—subdue—at once her spear and shield—
Avoid it—Virtue ebbs and Wisdom errs,
Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers!
What lost a world, and bade a hero fly?
The timid tear in Cleopatra's eye.
Yet be the soft triumvir's fault forgiven,
By this—how many lose not earth—but heaven!
Consign their souls to man's eternal foe,
And seal their own to spare some wanton's woe!

XVI.

'Tis morn—and o'er his alter'd features play 1160
The beams—without the hope of yesterday.—

What shall he be ere night? perchance a thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing:
By his closed eye unheeded and unfelt,
While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,
Chill—wet—and misty round each stiffened limb,
Refreshing earth—reviving all but him!—

END OF CANTO 11.

THE CORSAIR.

CANTO III.

“Come vedi—ancor non m’abbandona.”

DANTE.

I.

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea’s hills the setting sun ;
Not as in Northern climes obscurely bright, 1170
But one unclouded blaze of living light !
O’er the hush’d deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
On old Ægina’s rock, and Idra’s isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile ;
O’er his own regions lingering loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.

Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulph, unconquer'd Salamis!
Their azure arches through the long expanse 1180
More deeply purpled meet his mellowing glance,
And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,
Mark his gay course and own the hues of heaven;
Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve, his palest beam he cast,
When—Athens! here thy wisest look'd his last.
How watched thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd sage's¹¹ latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill— 1190
The precious hour of parting lingers still;
But sad his light to agonizing eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes:
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
The land, where Phœbus never frown'd before,
But ere he sunk below Cithæron's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled;

The soul of him who scorn'd to fear or fly—
Who liv'd and died, as none can live or die!

But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain, 1200

The queen of night asserts her silent reign.¹²

No murky vapour, herald of the storm,

Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form;

With cornice glimmering as the moon-beams play,

There the white column greets her grateful ray,

And bright around with quivering beams beset

Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret:

The groves of olive scattered dark and wide

Where meek Cephissus pours his scanty tide,

The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque, 1210

The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk,¹³

And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,

Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,

All tinged with varied hues arrest the eye—

And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,

Lulls his chaf'd breast from elemental war;

Again his waves in milder tints unfold
 Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
 Mixt with the shades of many a distant isle, 1220
 That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.¹⁴

II.

Not now my theme—why turn my thoughts to thee?
 Oh! who can look along thy native sea,
 Nor dwell upon thy name, whate'er the tale,
 So much its magic must o'er all prevail?
 Who that beheld that Sun upon thee set,
 Fair Athens! could thine evening face forget?
 Not he—whose heart nor time nor distance frees,
 Spell-bound within the clustering Cyclades!
 Nor seems this homage foreign to his strain, 1230
 His Corsair's isle was once thine own domain—
 Would that with freedom it were thine again!

III.

The Sun hath sunk—and, darker than the night,
 Sinks with its beam upon the beacon height—
 Medora's heart—the third day's come and gone—
 With it he comes not—sends not—faithless one!
 The wind was fair though light—and storms were none,

Last eve Anselmo's bark return'd, and yet
His only tidings that they had not met!
Though wild, as now, far different were the tale 1240
Had Conrad waited for that single sail.

The night-breeze freshens—she that day had past
In watching all that Hope proclaimed a mast;
Sadly she sate—on high—Impatience bore
At last her footsteps to the midnight shore,
And there she wandered heedless of the spray
That dash'd her garments oft, and warn'd away:
She saw not—felt not this—nor dared depart,
Nor deemed it cold—her chill was at her heart;
Till grew such certainty from that suspense— 1250
His very Sight had shock'd from life or sense!

It came at last—a sad and shattered boat,
Whose inmates first beheld whom first they sought—
Some bleeding—all most wretched—these the few—
Scarce knew they how escaped—*this* all they knew.
In silence darkling each appeared to wait
His fellow's mournful guess at Conrad's fate.

Something they would have said; but seemed to fear
To trust their accents to Medora's ear.

She saw at once, yet sunk not—trembled not— 1260

Beneath that grief—that loneliness of lot—

Within that meek fair form were feelings high,

That deem'd not till they found their energy.

While yet was Hope—they soften'd—flutter'd—wept—

All lost—that softness died not—but it slept—

And o'er its slumber rose that Strength which said,

“With nothing left to love—there's nought to dread.”

'Tis more than nature's; like the burning might

Delirium gathers from the fever's height.

“Silent you stand—nor would I hear you tell 1270

“What—speak not—breathe not—for I know it well—

“Yet would I ask—almost my lip denies

“The—quick your answer—tell me where he lies?”

“Lady! we know not—scarce with life we fled;

“But here is one denies that he is dead:

“He saw him bound; and bleeding—but alive.”

She heard no further—'twas in vain to strive—

So throb'd each vein—each thought—till then withstood;
 Her own dark soul—these words at once subdued—
 She totters—falls—and senseless had the wave 1280
 Perchance but snatch'd her from another grave;
 But that with hands though rude, yet weeping eyes,
 They yield such aid as Pity's haste supplies:
 Dash o'er her deathlike cheek the ocean dew,
 Raise—fan—sustain—till life returns anew;
 Awake her handmaids—with the matrons leave
 That fainting form o'er which they gaze and grieve;
 Then seek Anselmo's cavern to report
 The tale too tedious—when the triumph short.

IV.

In that wild council words wax'd warm and strange, 1290
 With thoughts of ransom, rescue, and revenge;
 All, save repose or flight—still lingering there
 Breathed Conrad's spirit, and forbade despair;
 Whate'er his fate—the breasts he form'd and led,
 Will save him living, or appease him dead.
 Woe to his foes! there yet survive a few,
 Whose deeds are daring, as their hearts are true.

V.

Within the Haram's secret chamber sate
 Stern Seyd, still pondering o'er his Captive's fate;
 His thoughts on love and hate alternate dwell, 1300
 Now with Gulnare, and now in Conrad's cell;
 Here at his feet the lovely slave reclined
 Surveys his brow—would soothe his gloom of mind,
 While many an anxious glance her large dark eye
 Sends in its idle search for sympathy,
 His only bends in seeming o'er his beads,¹⁵
 But inly views his victim as he bleeds.

“ Pacha ! the day is thine ; and on thy crest

“ Sits Triumph—Conrad taken—fall'n the rest !

“ His doom is fix'd—he dies—and well his fate 1310

“ Was earn'd—yet much too worthless for thy hate :

“ Methinks—a short release, for ransom told

“ With all his treasure, not unwisely sold ;

“ Report speaks largely of his pirate-hoard—

“ Would that of this my Pacha were the Lord !

“ While baffled—weakened by this fatal fray—
“ Watch’d—followed—he were then an easier prey ;
“ But once cut off—the remnant of his band
“ Embark their wealth, and seek a safer strand.”
“ Gulnare !—if for each drop of blood a gem 1320
“ Were offered rich as Stamboul’s diadem ;
“ If for each hair of his a massy mine
“ Of virgin ore should supplicating shine ;
“ If all our Arab tales divulge or dream
“ Of wealth were here—that gold should not redeem !
“ It had not now redeem’d a single hour—
“ But that I know him fetter’d, in my power ;
“ And, thirsting for revenge, I ponder still
“ On pangs that longest rack—and latest kill.”
“ Nay, Seyd !—I seek not to restrain thy rage, 1330
“ Too justly moved for mercy to assuage ;
“ My thoughts were only to secure for thee
“ His riches—thus released, he were not free :
“ Disabled, shorn of half his might and band,
“ His capture could but wait thy first command.”

“ His capture *could* !—and shall I then resign
“ One day to him—the wretch already mine ?—
“ Release my foe !—at whose remonstrance ?—thine !
“ Fair suitor !—to thy virtuous gratitude,
“ That thus repays this Giaour’s relenting mood, 1340
“ Which thee and thine alone of all could spare,
“ No doubt—regardless if the prize were fair,
“ My thanks and praise alike are due—now hear !
“ I have a counsel for thy gentler ear :
“ I do mistrust thee, woman ! and each word
“ Of thine stamps truth on all Suspicion heard.
“ Borne in his arms through fire from yon Serai—
“ Say, wert thou lingering there with him to fly ?
“ Thou need’st not answer—thy confession speaks,
“ Already reddening on thy guilty cheeks ; 1350
“ Then, lovely dame, bethink thee ! and beware :
“ ’Tis not *his* life alone may claim such care !
“ Another word and—nay—I need no more.
“ Accursed was the moment when he bore
“ Thee from the flames, which better far—but—no—
“ I then had mourn’d thee with a lover’s woe—
“ Now ’tis thy lord that warns—deceitful thing !
“ Know’st thou that I can clip thy wanton wing ?

“ In words alone I am not wont to chafe :

“ Look to thyself—nor deem thy falsehood safe !” 1360

He rose—and slowly, sternly thence withdrew,

Rage in his eye and threats in his adieu :

Ah ! little reck’d that chief of womanhood—

Which frowns ne’er quell’d, nor menaces subdued ;

And little deem’d he what thy heart—Gulnare !

When soft could feel, and when incens’d could dare.

His doubts appear’d to wrong—nor yet she knew

How deep the root from whence compassion grew—

She was a slave—from such may captives claim

A fellow-feeling—differing but in name ; 1370

Still half unconscious—heedless of his wrath,

Again she ventured on the dangerous path,

Again his rage repell’d—until arose

That strife of thought—the source of woman’s woes !

VI.

Meanwhile—long anxious—weary—still—the same

Roll’d day and night—his soul could terror tame—

This fearful interval of doubt and dread,

When every hour might doom him worse than dead,

When every step that echoed by the gate,
Might entering lead where axe and stake await; 1380
When every voice that grated on his ear
Might be the last that he could ever hear;
Could terror tame—that spirit stern and high
Had proved unwilling as unfit to die;
’Twas worn—perhaps decayed—yet silent bore
That conflict deadlier far than all before:
The heat of fight, the hurry of the gale,
Leave scarce one thought inert enough to quail;
But bound and fix’d in fettered solitude,
To pine, the prey of every changing mood; 1390
To gaze on thine own heart—and meditate
Irrevocable faults—and coming fate—
Too late the last to shun—the first to mend—
To count the hours that struggle to thine end,
With not a friend to animate and tell
To other ears that death became thee well;
Around thee foes to forge the ready lie,
And blot life’s latest scene with calumny:
Before thee tortures, which the soul can dare,
Yet doubts how well the shrinking flesh may bear; 1400

But deeply feels a single cry would shame,
 To valour's praise thy last and dearest claim;
 The life thou leav'st below—denied above
 By kind monopolists of heavenly love,
 And more than doubtful paradise—thy heaven
 Of earthly hope—thy loved one from thee riven.
 Such were the thoughts that outlaw must sustain,
 And govern pangs surpassing mortal pain:
 And those sustain'd he—boots it well or ill?
 Since not to sink beneath, is something still! 1410

VII.

The first day pass'd—he saw not her—Gulnare—
 The second—third—and still she came not there;
 But what her words avouch'd, her charms had done,
 Or else he had not seen another sun.
 The fourth day roll'd along—and with the night
 Came storm and darkness in their mingling might:
 Oh! how he listen'd to the rushing deep,
 That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep;
 And his wild spirit wilder wishes sent,
 Roused by the roar of his own element! 1420

Oft had he ridden on that winged wave,
 And loved its roughness for the speed it gave;
 And now its dashing echoed on his ear,
 A long known voice—alas! too vainly near!
 Loud sung the wind above—and, doubly loud,
 Shook o'er his turret cell the thunder-cloud;
 And flash'd the lightning by the latticed bar,
 To him more genial than the midnight star:
 Close to the glimmering grate he dragg'd his chain,
 And hoped *that* peril might not prove in vain. 1430
 He raised his iron hand to Heaven, and prayed
 One pitying flash to mar the form it made:
 His steel and impious prayer attract alike—
 The storm roll'd onward and disdain'd to strike;
 Its peal waxed fainter—ceased—he felt alone,
 As if some faithless friend had spurn'd his groan!

VIII.

The midnight pass'd—and to the massy door,
 A light step came—it paused—it moved once more;
 Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key—
 'Tis as his heart foreboded—that fair she! 1440

Whate'er her sins—to him a guardian saint,
And beauteous still as hermit's hope can paint;
Yet changed since last within that cell she came,
More pale her cheek—more tremulous her frame:
On him she cast her dark and hurried eye,
Which spoke before her accents—"thou must die!—"
"Yes, thou must die—there is but one resource,
"The last—the worst—if torture were not worse."

"Lady! I look to none—my lips proclaim 1449

"What last proclaim'd they—Conrad still the same:

"Why should'st thou seek an outlaw's life to spare,

"And change the sentence I deserve to bear?

"Well have I earn'd—nor here alone—the meed

"Of Seyd's revenge, by many a lawless deed."

"Why should I seek? because—Oh! didst thou not

"Redeem my life from worse than slavery's lot?

"Why should I seek?—hath misery made thee blind

"To the fond workings of a woman's mind!

"And must I say? albeit my heart rebel

"With all that woman feels, but should not tell— 1460

- " Because—despite thy crimes—that heart is moved—
" It fear'd thee—thank'd thee—pitied—madden'd—loved.
" Reply not—tell not now thy tale again,
" Thou lov'st another—and I love in vain ;
" Though fond as mine her bosom, form more fair,
" I rush through peril which she would not dare.
" If that thy heart to hers were truly dear,
" Were I thine own—thou wert not lonely here—
" An outlaw's spouse—and leave her lord to roam !
" What hath such gentle dame to do with home ? 1470
" But speak not now—o'er thine and o'er my head
" Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread ;
" If thou hast courage still, and would'st be free,
" Receive this poignard—rise—and follow me !"
" Ay—in my chains ! my steps will gently tread,
" With these adornments, o'er each slumbering head !
" Thou hast forgot—is this a garb for flight ?
" Or is that instrument more fit for fight ?"
" Misdoubting Corsair ! I have gain'd the guard,
" Ripe for revolt, and greedy for reward. 1480

- “ A single word of mine removes that chain :
“ Without some aid how here could I remain ?
“ Well, since we met, hath sped my busy time,
“ If in aught evil, for thy sake the crime :
“ The crime—’tis none to punish those of Seyd—
“ That hated tyrant, Conrad—he must bleed !
“ I see thee shudder—but my soul is changed—
“ Wrong’d—spurn’d—reviled—and it shall be avenged—
“ Accus’d of what till now my heart disdain’d—
“ Too faithful, though to bitter bondage chain’d. 1490
“ Yes, smile!—but he had little cause to sneer,
“ I was not treacherous then—nor thou too dear—
“ But he has said it—and the jealous well,
“ Those tyrants, teasing, tempting to rebel,
“ Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell.
“ I never loved—he bought me—somewhat high—
“ Since with me came a heart he could not buy.
“ I was a slave unmurmuring ; he hath said,
“ But for his rescue I with thee had fled.
“ ’Twas false thou know’st—but let such augurs rue, 1500
“ Their words are omens, Insult renders true.
“ Nor was thy respite granted to my prayer ;
“ This fleeting grace was only to prepare
“ New torments for thy life, and my despair.

“ Mine too he threatens; but his dotage still
“ Would fain reserve me for his lordly will:
“ When wearier of these fleeting charms and me,
“ There yawns the sack—and yonder rolls the sea!
“ What, am I then a toy for dotard’s play,
“ To wear but till the gilding frets away? 1510
“ I saw thee—loved thee—owe thee all—would save,
“ If but to shew how grateful is a slave.
“ But had he not thus menaced fame and life,
“ (And well he keeps his oaths pronounced in strife)
“ I still had saved thee—but the Pacha spared.
“ Now I am all thine own—for all prepared—
“ Thou lov’st me not—nor know’st—or but the worst.
“ Alas! this love—that hatred are the first—
“ Oh! could’st thou prove my truth, thou would’st not start,
“ Nor fear the fire that lights an Eastern heart, 1520
“ ’Tis now the beacon of thy safety—now
“ It points within the port a Mainote prow:
“ But in one chamber, where our path must lead,
“ There sleeps—he must not wake—the oppressor Seyd!”
“ Gulnare—Gulnare—I never felt till now
“ My abject fortune—withered fame so low:

- “ Seyd is mine enemy : had swept my band
“ From earth with ruthless but with open hand,
“ And therefore came I, in my bark of war,
“ To smite the smiter with the scimitar ; 1520
“ Such is my weapon—not the secret knife—
“ Who spares a woman’s seeks not slumber’s life—
“ Thine saved I gladly, Lady, not for this—
“ Let me not deem that mercy shewn amiss.
“ Now fare thee well—more peace be with thy breast !
“ Night wears apace—my last of earthly rest !”
- “ Rest ! Rest ! by sunrise must thy sinews shake,
“ And thy limbs writhe around the ready stake.
“ I heard the order—saw—I will not see—
“ If thou wilt perish, I will fall with thee. 1540
“ My life—my love—my hatred—all below
“ Are on this cast—Corsair ! ’tis but a blow !
“ Without it flight were idle—how evade
“ His sure pursuit ? my wrongs too unrepaid,
“ My youth disgraced—the long—long wasted years,
“ One blow shall cancel with our future fears ;
“ But since the dagger suits thee less than brand,
“ I’ll try the firmness of a female hand—

“ The guards are gain’d—one moment all were o’er—
“ Corsair ! we meet in safety or no more ; 1550
“ If errs my feeble hand, the morning cloud
“ Will hover o’er thy scaffold, and my shroud.”

IX.

She turn’d, and vanish’d ere he could reply,
But his glance followed far with eager eye;
And gathering, as he could, the links that bound
His form, to curl their length, and curb their sound,
Since bar and bolt no more his steps preclude,
He, fast as fettered limbs allow, pursued.
’Twas dark and winding, and he knew not where
That passage led—nor lamp nor guard were there : 1560
He sees a dusky glimmering—shall he seek
Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak ?
Chance guides his steps—a freshness seems to bear
Full on his brow, as if from morning air—
He reached an open gallery—on his eye
Gleam’d the last star of night—the clearing sky—
Yet scarcely heeded these—another light
From a lone chamber struck upon his sight.

Towards it he moved, a scarcely closing door
 Reveal'd the ray within, but nothing more. 1570
 With hasty step a figure outward past,
 Then paused—and turn'd—and paused—'tis She at last!
 No poignard in that hand—nor sign of ill—
 “Thanks to that softening heart—she could not kill!”
 Again he looked, the wildness of her eye
 Starts from the day abrupt and fearfully.
 She stopp'd—threw back her dark far-floating hair,
 That nearly veil'd her face and bosom fair:
 As if she late had bent her leaning head
 Above some object of her doubt or dread. 1580
 They meet—upon her brow—unknown—forgot—
 Her hurrying hand had left—'twas but a spot—
 Its hue was all he saw—and scarce withstood—
 Oh! slight but certain pledge of crime—'tis blood!

X.

He had seen battle—he had brooded lone
 O'er promised pangs to sentenced guilt foreshown—
 He had been tempted—chastened—and the chain
 Yet on his arms might ever there remain—

But ne'er from strife—captivity—remorse—
 From all his feelings in their inmost force— 1590
 So thrill'd—so shuddered every creeping vein
 As now they froze before that purple stain.
 That spot of blood, that light but guilty streak,
 Had banish'd all the beauty from her cheek!
 Blood he had viewed—could view unmoved—but then
 It flow'd in combat, or was shed by men!

XI.

“ 'Tis done—he nearly waked—but it is done—
 “ Corsair! he perish'd—thou art dearly won.
 “ All words would now be vain—away—away!
 “ Our bark is tossing—'tis already day— 1600
 “ The few gain'd over, now are wholly mine,
 “ And these thy yet surviving band shall join:
 “ Anon my voice shall vindicate my hand,
 “ When once our sail forsakes this hated strand.”

XII.

She clapp'd her hands—and through the gallery pour,
 Equipp'd for flight, her vassals—Greek and Moor;

Silent but quick they stoop, his chains unbind;
Once more his limbs are free as mountain wind!
But on his heavy heart such sadness sate,
As if they there transferr'd that iron weight— 1610
No words are uttered—at her sign, a door
Reveals the secret passage to the shore;
The city lies behind—they speed, they reach
The glad waves dancing on the yellow beach;
And Conrad following, at her beck, obey'd,
Nor cared he now if rescued or betray'd;
Resistance were as useless as if Seyd
Yet lived to view the doom his ire decreed.

XIII.

Embark'd, the sail unfurl'd, the light breeze blew—
How much had Conrad's memory to review! 1620
Sunk he in contemplation—till the cape
Where last he anchor'd rear'd its giant shape.
Ah!—since that fatal night, though brief the time,
Had swept an age of terror, grief, and crime.
As its far shadow frown'd above the mast,
He veil'd his face, and sorrowed as he past;
He thought of all—Gonsalvo and his band,
His fleeting triumph and his failing hand;

He thought on her afar, his lonely bride—
 He turned and saw—Gulnare, the homicide! 1630

XIV.

She watch'd his features till she could not bear
 Their freezing aspect and averted air,
 And that strange fierceness foreign to her eye,
 Fell quench'd in tears, too late to shed or dry.
 She knelt beside him and his hand she prest,
 "Thou may'st forgive though Alla's self detest;
 "But for that deed of darkness what wert thou?
 "Reproach me—but not yet—Oh! spare me *now*!
 "I am not what I seem—this fearful night
 "My brain bewilder'd—do not madden quite! 1640
 "If I had never loved—though less my guilt,
 "Thou hadst not lived to—hate me—if thou wilt."

XV.

She wrongs his thoughts, they more himself upbraid
 Than her, though undesign'd, the wretch he made;
 But speechless all, deep, dark, and unexpressed,
 They bleed within that silent cell—his breast.

Still onward, fair the breeze, nor rough the surge,
The blue waves sport around the stern they urge;
Far on the horizon's verge appears a speck—
A spot—a mast—a sail—an armed deck! 1650
Their little bark her men of watch descry,
And ampler canvas woos the wind from high;
She bears her down majestically near,
Speed on her prow, and terror in her tier;
A flash is seen—the ball beyond their bow
Booms harmless hissing to the deep below.
Uprose keen Conrad from his silent trance,
A long, long absent gladness in his glance;
“ ’Tis mine—my blood-red flag—again—again—
“ I am not all deserted on the main!” 1660
They own the signal, answer to the hail,
Hoist out the boat at once, and slacken sail.
“ ’Tis Conrad!—Conrad!” shouting from the deck,
Command nor duty could their transport check!
With light alacrity and gaze of pride,
They view him mount once more his vessel's side;
A smile relaxing in each rugged face,
Their arms can scarce forbear a rough embrace.

He—half forgetting danger and defeat,
Returns their greeting as a chief may greet, 1670
Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's hand,
And feels he yet can conquer and command!

XVI.

These greetings o'er, the feelings that o'erflow,
Yet grieve to win him back without a blow;
They sail'd prepared for vengeance—had they known
A woman's hand secured that deed her own,
She were their queen—less scrupulous are they
Than haughty Conrad how they win their way.
With many an asking smile, and wondering stare,
They whisper round, and gaze upon Gulnare; 1680
And her, at once above—beneath her sex,
Whom blood appall'd not, their regards perplex.
To Conrad turns her faint imploring eye,
She drops her veil, and stands in silence by;
Her arms are meekly folded on that breast,
Which—Conrad safe—to fate resign'd the rest.
Though worse than phrenzy could that bosom fill,
Extreme in love or hate—in good or ill,
The worst of crimes had left her woman still!

XVII.

This Conrad mark'd, and felt—ah! could he less: 1690
Hate of that deed—but grief for her distress;
What she had done no tears can wash away,
And heaven must punish on its angry day:
But—it was done—he knew, whate'er her guilt,
For him that poignard smote—that blood was spilt—
And he was free!—and she for him had given
Her all on earth, and more than all in heaven!
And now he turn'd him to that dark-eyed slave
Whose brow was bowed beneath the glance he gave, 1699
Who now seemed changed and humbled:—faint and meek,
But varying oft the colour of her cheek
To deeper shades of paleness—all its red
That fearful spot which stain'd it from the dead!
He took that hand—it trembled—now too late—
So soft in love—so wildly nerved in hate;
He clasp'd that hand—it trembled—and his own
Had lost its firmness, and his voice its tone.
“Gulnare!”—but she replied not—“dear Gulnare!”
She raised her eye—her only answer there—
At once she sought and sunk in his embrace: 1710
If he had driven her from that resting place,

His had been more or less than mortal heart,
But—good or ill—it bade her not depart.
Perchance, but for the bodings of his breast,
His latest virtue then had joined the rest.
Yet even Medora might forgive the kiss
That asked from form so fair no more than this—
The first—the last that Frailty stole from Faith—
To lips where Love had lavish'd all his breath,
To lips—whose broken sighs such fragrance fling, 1720
As he had fann'd them freshly with his wing!

XVIII.

They gain by twilight's hour their lonely isle.
To them the very rocks appear to smile,
The haven hums with many a cheering sound,
The beacons blaze their wonted stations round,
The boats are darting o'er the curly bay,
And sportive dolphins bend them through the spray;
Even the hoarse sea-bird's shrill discordant shriek,
Greets like the welcome of his tuneless beak!
Beneath each lamp that through its lattice gleams, 1730
Their fancy paints the friends that trim the beams.

Oh! what can sanctify the joys of home,
Like Hope's gay glance from Ocean's troubled foam?

XIX.

The lights are high on beacon and from bower,
And midst them Conrad seeks Medora's tower:
He looks in vain—'tis strange—and all remark,
Amid so many, her's alone is dark.
'Tis strange—of yore its welcome never fail'd,
Nor now, perchance, extinguish'd, only veil'd.
With the first boat descends he for the shore, 1740
And looks impatient on the lingering oar,
Oh! for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,
To bear him like an arrow to that height!
With the first pause the resting rowers gave,
He waits not—looks not—leaps into the wave,
Strives through the surge—bestrides the beach—and high
Ascends the path familiar to his eye,
He reach'd his turret door—he paused—no sound
Broke from within—and all was night around.
He knock'd, and loudly—footstep nor reply 1750
Announced that any heard or deem'd him nigh;

He knock'd—but faintly—for his trembling hand
 Refus'd to aid his heavy heart's demand.
 The portal opens—'tis a well known face—
 But not the form he panted to embrace.
 Its lips are silent—twice his own essay'd,
 And fail'd to frame the question they delay'd;
 He snatch'd the lamp—its light will answer all—
 It quits his grasp—expiring in the fall.
 He would not wait for that reviving ray— 1760
 As soon could he have lingered there for day;
 But, glimmering through the dusky corridore,
 Another chequers o'er the shadowed floor;
 His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold
 All that his heart believed not—yet foretold!

XX.

He turn'd not—spoke not—sunk not—fix'd his look,
 And set the anxious frame that lately shook:
 He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,
 And know—but dare not own we gaze in vain!
 In life itself she was so still and fair, 1770
 That death with gentler aspect withered there;

And the cold flowers ¹⁶ her colder hand contain'd,
In that last grasp as tenderly were strain'd
As if she scarcely felt, but feign'd a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep:
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow—
And veil'd—thought shrinks from all that lurk'd below—
Oh! o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light!
Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse, 1780
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips—
Yet—yet they seem as they forbore to smile,
And wish'd repose—but only for a while;
But the white shroud, and each extended tress,
Long—fair—but spread in utter lifelessness,
Which, late the sport of every summer wind,
Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to bind;
These—and the pale pure cheek, became the bier—
But she is nothing—wherefore is he here?

XXI.

He ask'd no question—all were answer'd now 1790
By the first glance on that still—marble brow.
It was enough—she died—what reck'd it how?

The love of youth, the hope of better years,
The source of softest joy and tenderest fears,
The only living thing he could not hate,
Was reft at once—and he deserv'd his fate,
But did not feel it less ;—the good explore,
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar :
The proud—the wayward—who have fixed below
Their joy—and find this earth enough for woe, 1800
Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—
But who in patience parts with all delight ?
Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern
Hide hearts where grief hath little left to learn ;
And many a withering thought lies hid—not lost—
In smiles that least befit who wear them most.

XXII.

By those, that deepest feel, are ill exprest
The indistinctness of the suffering breast ;
Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one,
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none ; 1810
No words suffice the secret soul to show,
And Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.

On Conrad's stricken soul exhaustion prest,
And stupor almost lull'd it into rest;
So feeble now—his mother's softness crept
To those wild eyes, which like an infant's wept:
It was the very weakness of his brain,
Which thus confess'd without relieving pain.
None saw his trickling tears—perchance, if seen,
That useless flood of grief had never been: 1820
Nor long they flowed—he dried them to depart,
In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart:
The sun goes forth—but Conrad's day is dim—
And the night cometh—ne'er to pass from him—
There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,
On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind!
Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside
To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide!

XXIII.

His heart was form'd for softness—warp'd to wrong—
Betray'd too early, and beguil'd too long; 1830
Each feeling pure—as falls the dropping dew
Within the grot; like that had harden'd too;—

Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials pass'd,
 But sunk, and chill'd, and petrified at last.
 Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the rock;
 If such his heart, so shatter'd it the shock.
 There grew one flower beneath its rugged brow,
 Though dark the shade—it shelter'd,—saved till now.
 The thunder came—that bolt hath blasted both,
 The Granite's firmness, and the Lily's growth : 1840
 The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell
 Its tale, but shrunk and wither'd where it fell,
 And of its cold protector, blacken round
 But shiver'd fragments on the barren ground !

XXIV.

'Tis morn—to venture on his lonely hour
 Few dare—though now Anselmo sought his tower.
 He was not there—nor seen along the shore ;
 Ere night, alarm'd, their isle is traversed o'er :
 Another morn—another bids them seek,
 And shout his name till echo waxeth weak ; 1850
 Mount—grotto—cavern—valley search'd in vain,
 They find on shore a sea-boat's broken chain—
 Their hope revives—they follow o'er the main.

'Tis idle all—moons roll on moons away,
And Conrad comes not—came not since that day—
Nor trace, nor tidings of his doom declare
Where lives his grief, or perish'd his despair!
Long mourn'd his band whom none could mourn beside;
And fair the monument they gave his bride:
For him they raise not the recording stone— 1860
His death yet dubious, deeds too widely known;
He left a Corsair's name to other times,
Link'd with one virtue, and a thousand crimes.

NOTES.

The time in this poem may seem too short for the occurrences, but the whole of the Ægean isles are within a few hours sail of the continent, and the reader must be kind enough to take the *wind* as I have often found it.

Note 1, page 23, line 2.

“ Of fair Olympia lov'd and left of old.
Orlando, Canto 10.

Note 2, page 29, line 10.

Around the waves' phosphoric brightness broke;

By night, particularly in a warm latitude, every stroke of the oar, every motion of the boat or ship, is followed by a slight flash like sheet lightning from the water.

Note 3, page 33, line 1.

Though to the rest the sober berry's juice,
Coffee.

Note 4, page 33, line 3.

The long Chibouque's dissolving cloud supply,
Pipe.

Note 5, page 33, line 4.

While dance the Almas to wild minstrelsy;
Dancing-girls.

Note 6, page 37, line 15.

“ And my stern vow and order’s laws oppose

The Dervises are in colleges, and of different orders, as the monks.

Note 7, page 39, line 9.

They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai!

Satan.

Note 8, page 40, line 8.

He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight,

A common and not very novel effect of Mussulman anger. See Prince Eugene’s Memoirs, page 24. “The Seraskier” received a wound in the thigh; he plucked up his beard “by the roots, because he was obliged to quit the field.”

Note 9, page 42, line 11.

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare,

Gulnare, a female name; it means, literally, the flower of the Pomegranate.

Note 10, page 53, line 13.

Till even the scaffold echoes with their jest!

In Sir Thomas More, for instance, on the scaffold, and Anne Boleyn in the Tower, when grasping her neck, she remarked, that it “was too slender to trouble the headsman much.” During one part of the French Revolution, it became a fashion to leave some “mot” as a legacy; and the quantity of facetious last words spoken during that period would form a melancholy jest-book of a considerable size.

Note 11, page 62, line 12.

That closed their murder'd sage's latest day!

Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset (the hour of execution), notwithstanding the entreaties of his disciples to wait till the sun went down.

Note 12, page 63, line 4.

The queen of night asserts her silent reign.

The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our own country; the days in winter are longer, but in summer of shorter duration.

Note 13, page 63, line 14.

The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk,

The Kiosk is a Turkish summer-house; the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the temple of Theus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes.—Cephisus' stream is indeed scanty, and Ilissus has no stream at all.

Note 14, page 64, line 4.

That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.

The opening lines as far as section II. have, perhaps, little business here, and were annexed to an unpublished (though printed) poem; but they were written on the spot in the Spring of 1811, and—I scarce know why—the reader must excuse their appearance here if he can.

Note 15, page 68, line 9.

His only bends in seeming o'er his beads,

The Comboloio, or Mahometan rosary; the beads are in number ninety-nine.

Note 16, page 91, line 1.

And the cold flowers her colder hand contain'd,

In the Levant it is the custom to strew flowers on the bodies of the dead, and in the hands of young persons to place a nosegay.

POEMS.

To a Lady weeping.

WEEP, daughter of a royal line,
A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
Ah, happy! if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away!
Weep—for thy tears are Virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles;
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

March, 1812.

From the Turkish.

1.

THE chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound,
The heart that offered both was true,
And ill deserv'd the fate it found.

2.

These gifts were charm'd by secret spell
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well,
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

3.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet—till thou could'st think
In other hands its notes were such.

4.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shiver'd in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restring the chords, renew the clasp.

5.

When thou wert chang'd, they alter'd too;
The chain is broke, the music mute:
'Tis past—to them and thee adieu—
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

SONNET.

To Geneva.

THINE eyes blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features—caught
From contemplation—where serenely wrought,
Seems Sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair—
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought—
I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.
With such an aspect by his colours blent,
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent)
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—
Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent!
With nought Remorse can claim—nor Virtue scorn.

SONNET.

To Geneva.

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,
And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
My heart would wish away that ruder glow:—
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but oh!
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow;
For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
The soul of melancholy Gentleness
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

Inscription on the Monument of a Newfoundland Dog.

WHEN some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below ;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been :
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonour'd falls, unnotic'd all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth :
While man, vain insect ! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man ! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debas'd by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust !

Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit !
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye ! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn :
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise,
I never knew but one, and here he lies.

Newstead Abbey, Oct. 30, 1808.

Farewell.

FAREWELL! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal availed on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky,
'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;
But in my breast, and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel;
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell!—Farewell!

THE END.

L A R A,

A T A L E.

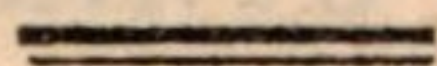
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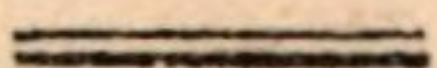
A T A L E.

BY LORD BYRON.

CANTO I.



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1814.

L A R A,

A TALE

BY LORD BYRON.

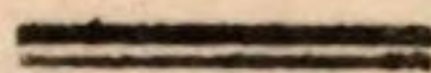
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L A R A,

A TALE.



CANTO I.

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N T A L E

CANTO I

LARA:

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I.

THE Serfs are glad through Lara's wide domain,
And Slavery half forgets her feudal chain;
He, their unhop'd, but unforgotten lord,
The long self-exiled chieftain is restored:
There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall;
Far chequering o'er the pictured window plays
The unwonted faggots' hospitable blaze;
And gay retainers gather round the hearth
With tongues all loudness, and with eyes all mirth.

II.

The chief of Lara is returned again:
And why had Lara cross'd the bounding main?
Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,
Lord of himself;—that heritage of woe,
That fearful empire which the human breast
But holds to rob the heart within of rest!—
With none to check, and few to point in time
The thousand paths that slope the way to crime;
Then, when he most required commandment, then
Had Lara's daring boyhood govern'd men.
It skills not, boots not, step by step to trace
His youth through all the mazes of its race;
Short was the course his restlessness had run,
But long enough to leave him half undone.

20

III.

And Lara left in youth his father-land;
But from the hour he waved his parting hand
Each trace wax'd fainter of his course, till all
Had nearly ceased his memory to recall.

His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,
'Twas all they knew, that Lara was not there; 30
Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.
His hall scarce echoes with his wonted name,
His portrait darkens in its fading frame,
Another chief consoled his destined bride,
The young forgot him, and the old had died;
“ Yet doth he live!” exclaims the impatient heir,
And sighs for sables which he must not wear.
A hundred scutcheons deck with gloomy grace
The Laras’ last and longest dwelling place; 40
But one is absent from the mouldering file
That now were welcome in that Gothic pile.

IV.

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess;
They more might marvel, when the greeting’s o’er,
Not that he came, but came not long before:
No train is his beyond a single page,
Of foreign aspect, and of tender age.

Years had roll'd on, and fast they speed away
To those that wander as to those that stay; 50
But lack of tidings from another clime
Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time :
They see, they recognise, yet almost deem
The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's prime,
Though seared by toil, and something touch'd by time;
His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce forgot,
Might be untaught him by his varied lot;
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame : 60
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins
No more than pleasure from the stripling wins;
And such, if not yet harden'd in their course,
Might be redeem'd, nor ask a long remorse.

V.

And they indeed were changed—'tis quickly seen
Whate'er he be, 'twas not what he had been;

That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at last,
And spake of passions, but of passion past;
The pride, but not the fire, of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise; 70
A high demeanour, and a glance that took
Their thoughts from others by a single look;
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound;
All these seem'd his, and something more beneath
Than glance could well reveal, or accent breathe:
Ambition, glory, love, the common aim
That some can conquer, and that all would claim, 80
Within his breast appear'd no more to strive,
Yet seem'd as lately they had been alive;
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace
At moments lighten'd o'er his livid face.

VI.

Not much he lov'd long question of the past,
Nor told of wondrous wilds, and desarts vast

In those far lands where he had wandered lone,
And—as himself would have it seem—unknown;
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,
Nor glean experience from his fellow man;
But what he had beheld he shunn'd to show,
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know;
If still more prying such enquiry grew,
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.

VII.

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,
Warm was his welcome to the haunts of men;
Born of high lineage, link'd in high command,
He mingled with the Magnates of his land;
Join'd the carousals of the great and gay,
And saw them smile or sigh their hours away:
But still he only saw, and did not share
The common pleasure or the general care;
He did not follow what they all pursued
With hope still baffled, still to be renew'd;
Nor shadowy honour, nor substantial gain,
Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's pain:

Around him some mysterious circle thrown
Repell'd approach, and showed him still alone;
Upon his eye sate something of reproof,
That kept at least frivolity aloof; 110
And things more timid that beheld him near,
In silence gaz'd, or whisper'd mutual fear;
And they the wiser, friendlier few confess'd
They deem'd him better than his air express'd.

VIII.

'Twas strange—in youth all action and all life,
Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife;
Woman—the field—the ocean—all that gave
Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,
In turn he tried—he ransack'd all below,
And found his recompence in joy or woe, 120
No tame, trite medium; for his feelings sought
In that intenseness an escape from thought:
The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed
On that the feebler elements hath rais'd;
The rapture of his heart had look'd on high,
And ask'd if greater dwelt beyond the sky:

Chain'd to excess, the slave of each extreme,
How woke he from the wildness of that dream?
Alas! he told not—but he did awake
To curse the wither'd heart that would not break. 130

IX.

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,
With eye more curious he appear'd to scan,
And oft in sudden mood for many a day
From all communion he would start away:
And then, his rarely call'd attendants said,
Through night's long hours would sound his hurried tread
O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frown'd
In rude but antique portraiture around.
They heard, but whisper'd—" *that* must not be known—
" The sound of words less earthly than his own. 140
" Yes, they who choose might smile, but some had seen
" They scarce knew what, but more than should have been.
" Why gaz'd he so upon the ghastly head
" Which hands profane had gather'd from the dead,
" That still beside his open'd volume lay,
" As if to startle all save him away?

“ Why slept he not when others were at rest ?
“ Why heard no music, and received no guest ?
“ All was not well they deemed—but where the wrong ?
“ Some knew perchance—but ’twere a tale too long ; 150
“ And such besides were too discreetly wise,
“ To more than hint their knowledge in surmise ;
“ But if they would—they could”—around the board
Thus Lara’s vassals prattled of their lord.

X.

It was the night—and Lara’s glassy stream
The stars are studding, each with imaged beam :
So calm, the waters scarcely seem to stray,
And yet they glide like happiness away ;
Reflecting far and fairy-like from high
The immortal lights that live along the sky : 160
Its banks are fringed with many a goodly tree,
And flowers the fairest that may feast the bee ;
Such in her chaplet infant Dian wove,
And Innocence would offer to her love.
These deck the shore ; the waves their channel make
In windings bright and mazy, like the snake.

All was so still, so soft in earth and air,
You scarce would start to meet a spirit there ;
Secure that nought of evil could delight
To walk in such a scene, on such a night ! 170
It was a moment only for the good :
So Lara deemed, nor longer there he stood,
But turned in silence to his castle-gate ;
Such scene his soul no more could contemplate :
Such scene reminded him of other days,
Of skies more cloudless, moons of purer blaze,
Of nights more soft and frequent, hearts that now—
No—no—the storm may beat upon his brow,
Unfelt—unsparing—but a night like this,
A night of beauty mock'd such breast as his. 180

XI.

He turned within his solitary hall,
And his high shadow shot along the wall ;
There were the painted forms of other times,
'Twas all they left of virtues or of crimes,
Save vague tradition : and the gloomy vaults
That hid their dust, their foibles, and their faults ;

And half a column of the pompous page,
That speeds the specious tale from age to age ;
Where history's pen its praise or blame supplies,
And lies like truth, and still most truly lies. 190
He wandering mused, and as the moon-beam shone
Through the dim lattice o'er the floor of stone,
And the high fretted roof, and saints, that there
O'er Gothic windows knelt in pictured prayer,
Reflected in fantastic figures grew,
Like life, but not like mortal life, to view ;
His bristling locks of sable, brow of gloom,
And the wide waving of his shaken plume
Glanced like a spectre's attributes, and gave
His aspect all that terror gives the grave. 200

XII.

'Twas midnight—all was slumber; the lone light
Dimm'd in the lamp, as loth to break the night.
Hark! there be murmurs heard in Lara's hall—
A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call!
A long, loud shriek—and silence—did they hear
That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear?

They heard and rose, and tremulously brave
Rush where the sound invoked their aid to save;
They come with half-lit tapers in their hands,
And snatch'd in startled haste unbelted brands. 210

XIII.

Cold as the marble where his length was laid,
Pale as the beam that o'er his features played,
Was Lara stretch'd; his half drawn sabre near,
Dropp'd it should seem in more than nature's fear;
Yet he was firm, or had been firm till now,
And still defiance knit his gathered brow;
Though mix'd with terror, senseless as he lay,
There lived upon his lip the wish to slay;
Some half form'd threat in utterance there had died,
Some imprecation of despairing pride; 220
His eye was almost seal'd, but not forsook,—
Even in its trance, the gladiator's look,
That oft awake his aspect could disclose,
And now was fix'd in horrible repose.
They raise him—bear him;—hush! he breathes, he speaks,
The swarthy blush recolours in his cheeks,

His lip resumes its red, his eye, though dim,
Rolls wide and wild, each slowly quivering limb
Recalls its function, but his words are strung
In terms that seem not of his native tongue; 230
Distinct but strange, enough they understand
To deem them accents of another land,
And such they were, and meant to meet an ear
That hears him not—alas! that cannot hear!

XIV.

His page approach'd, and he alone appear'd
To know the import of the words they heard;
And by the changes of his cheek and brow
They were not such as Lara should avow,
Nor he interpret, yet with less surprise
Than those around their chieftain's state he eyes, 240
But Lara's prostrate form he bent beside,
And in that tongue which seem'd his own replied,
And Lara heeds those tones that gently seem
To soothe away the horrors of his dream;
If dream it were, that thus could overthrow
A breast that needed not ideal woe.

XV.

Whate'er his phrenzy dream'd or eye beheld,
If yet remember'd ne'er to be reveal'd,
Rests at his heart: the custom'd morning came,
And breath'd new vigour in his shaken frame; 250
And solace sought he none from priest nor leech,
And soon the same in movement and in speech
As heretofore he fill'd the passing hours,
Nor less he smiles, nor more his forehead frowns
Than these were wont; and if the coming night
Appear'd less welcome now to Lara's sight,
He to his marvelling vassals show'd it not,
Whose shuddering prov'd *their* fear was less forgot.
In trembling pairs (alone they dared not) crawl
The astonish'd slaves, and shun the fated hall; 260
The waving banner, and the clapping door,
The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;
Aught they behold or hear their thought appals:
As evening saddens o'er the dark grey walls.

XVI.

Vain thought! that hour of ne'er unravell'd gloom
Came not again, or Lara could assume
A seeming of forgetfulness that made
His vassals more amaz'd nor less afraid— 270
Had memory vanish'd then with sense restored?
Since word, nor look, nor gesture of their lord
Betrayed a feeling that recalled to these
That fevered moment of his mind's disease—
Was it a dream? was his the voice that spoke
Those strange wild accents; his the cry that broke
Their slumber? his the oppress'd o'er-laboured heart
That ceased to beat, the look that made them start?
Could he who thus had suffered, so forget
When such as saw that suffering shudder yet? 280
Or did that silence prove his memory fix'd
Too deep for words, indelible, unmix'd
In that corroding secrecy which gnaws
The heart to show the effect, but not the cause?
Not so in him; his breast had buried both,
Nor common gazers could discern the growth

Of thoughts that mortal lips must leave half told;
They choak the feeble words that would unfold.

XVII.

In him inexplicably mix'd appeared
Much to be loved and hated, sought and feared; 290
Opinion varying o'er his hidden lot,
In praise or railing ne'er his name forgot;
His silence formed a theme for others' prate—
They guess'd—they gazed—they fain would know his fate.
What had he been? what was he, thus unknown,
Who walked their world, his lineage only known?
A hater of his kind? yet some would say,
With them he could seem gay amidst the gay;
But own'd, that smile if oft observed and near,
Waned in its mirth and withered to a sneer; 300
That smile might reach his lip, but passed not by,
None e'er could trace its laughter to his eye:
Yet there was softness too in his regard,
At times, a heart as not by nature hard,
But once perceiv'd, his spirit seem'd to chide
Such weakness, as unworthy of its pride,

And steel'd itself, as scorning to redeem
One doubt from others half withheld esteem;
In self-inflicted penance of a breast
Which tenderness might once have wrung from rest; 310
In vigilance of grief that would compel
The soul to hate for having lov'd too well.

XVIII.

There was in him a vital scorn of all:
As if the worst had fall'n which could befall
He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
An erring spirit from another hurled;
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escaped;
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet
His mind would half exult and half regret: 320
With more capacity for love than earth
Bestows on most of mortal mould and birth,
His early dreams of good outstripp'd the truth,
And troubled manhood followed baffled youth;
With thought of years in phantom chace mispent,
And wasted powers for better purpose lent;

And fiery passions that had poured their wrath
In hurried desolation o'er his path,
And left the better feelings all at strife
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life; 330
But haughty still, and loth himself to blame,
He called on Nature's self to share the shame,
And charged all faults upon the fleshly form
She gave to clog the soul, and feast the worm;
'Till he at last confounded good and ill,
And half mistook for fate the acts of will:
Too high for common selfishness, he could
At times resign his own for others' good,
But not in pity, not because he ought,
But in some strange perversity of thought, 340
That swayed him onward with a secret pride
To do what few or none would do beside;
And this same impulse would in tempting time
Mislead his spirit equally to crime;
So much he soared beyond, or sunk beneath
The men with whom he felt condemned to breathe,
And longed by good or ill to separate
Himself from all who shared his mortal state;

His mind abhorring this had fixed her throne
Far from the world, in regions of her own; 350
Thus coldly passing all that passed below,
His blood in temperate seeming now would flow:
Ah! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glowed,
But ever in that icy smoothness flowed!
'Tis true, with other men their path he walked,
And like the rest in seeming did and talked,
Nor outraged Reason's rules by flaw nor start,
His madness was not of the head, but heart;
And rarely wandered in his speech, or drew
His thoughts so forth as to offend the view. 360

XIX.

With all that chilling mystery of mien,
And seeming gladness to remain-unseen;
He had (if 'twere not nature's boon) an art
Of fixing memory on another's heart:
It was not love perchance—nor hate—nor aught
That words can image to express the thought;
But they who saw him did not see in vain,
And once beheld, would ask of him again:

And those to whom he spake remembered well,
And on the words, however light, would dwell: 370
None knew, nor how, nor why, but he entwined
Himself perforce around the hearer's mind;
There he was stamp'd, in liking, or in hate,
If greeted once; however brief the date
That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,
Still there within the inmost thought he grew.
You could not penetrate his soul, but found,
Despite your wonder, to your own he wound;
His presence haunted still; and from the breast
He forced an all unwilling interest; 380
Vain was the struggle in that mental net,
His spirit seemed to dare you to forget!

XX.

There is a festival, where knights and dames,
And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims
Appear—a highborn and a welcomed guest
To Otho's hall came Lara with the rest.
The long carousal shakes the illumin'd hall,
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball;

And the gay dance of bounding Beauty's train
Links grace and harmony in happiest chain: 390
Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands
That mingle there in well according bands;
It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,
And make Age smile, and dream itself to youth,
And Youth forget such hour was past on earth—
So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth!

XXI.

And Lara gaz'd on these sedately glad,
His brow belied him if his soul was sad,
And his glance followed fast each fluttering fair,
Whose steps of lightness woke no echo there: 400
He lean'd against the lofty pillar nigh
With folded arms and long attentive eye,
Nor mark'd a glance so sternly fix'd on his—
Ill brook'd high Lara scrutiny like this:
At length he caught it; 'tis a face unknown,
But seems as searching his, and his alone;
Prying and dark, a stranger's by his mien,
Who still till now had gaz'd on him unseen;

At length encountering meets the mutual gaze
 Of keen enquiry, and of mute amaze; 440
 On Lara's glance emotion gathering grew,
 As if distrusting that the stranger threw;
 Along the stranger's aspect fix'd and stern
 Flash'd more than thence the vulgar eye could learn.

XXII.

"'Tis he!" the stranger cried, and those that heard
 Re-echoed fast and far the whisper'd word.
 "'Tis he!"—" 'Tis who?" they question far and near,
 Till louder accents rung on Lara's ear;
 So widely spread, few bosoms well could brook
 The general marvel, or that single look; 420
 But Lara stirr'd not, changed not—the surprise
 That sprung at first to his arrested eyes
 Seem'd now subsided; neither sunk nor rais'd
 Glanced his eye round, though still the stranger gaz'd;
 And drawing nigh, exclaim'd, with haughty sneer,
 "'Tis he!—how came he thence?—what doth he here?"

XXIII.

It were too much for Lara to pass by
Such question, so repeated fierce and high;
With look collected, but with accent cold,
More mildly firm than petulantly bold, 430
He turn'd, and met the inquisitorial tone—
“ My name is Lara!—when thine own is known,
“ Doubt not my fitting answer to requite
“ The unlook'd for courtesy of such a knight.
“ 'Tis Lara!—further wouldst thou mark or ask?
“ I shun no question, and I wear no mask.”
“ Thou shun'st no question! Ponder—is there none
“ Thy heart must answer, though thine ear would shun?
“ And deem'st thou me unknown too? Gaze again!
“ At least thy memory was not given in vain : 440
“ Oh! never canst thou cancel half her debt,
“ Eternity forbids thee to forget.”
With slow and searching glance upon his face
Grew Lara's eyes, but nothing there could trace
They knew, or chose to know—with dubious look
He deign'd no answer, but his head he shook,

And half contemptuous turn'd to pass away;
But the stern stranger motioned him to stay.
“ A word!—I charge thee stay, and answer here
“ To one, who, wert thou noble, were thy peer; 450
“ But as thou wast and art—nay, frown not, lord,
“ If false, 'tis easy to disprove the word—
“ But, as thou wast and art, on thee looks down,
“ Distrusts thy smiles, but shakes not at thy frown.
“ Art thou not he whose deeds——?”
“ Whate'er I be,
“ Words wild as these, accusers like to thee
“ I list no further; those with whom they weigh
“ May hear the rest, nor venture to gainsay
“ The wondrous tale no doubt thy tongue can tell,
“ Which thus begins so courteously and well. 460
“ Let Otho cherish here his polish'd guest,
“ To him my thanks and thoughts shall be expressed.”
And here their wondering host hath interposed—
“ Whate'er there be between you undisclosed,
“ This is no time nor fitting place to mar
“ The mirthful meeting with a wordy war.

“ If thou, Sir Ezzelin, hast ought to show
“ Which it befits Count Lara’s ear to know,
“ To-morrow, here, or elsewhere, as may best
“ Beseem your mutual judgment, speak the rest; 470
“ I pledge myself for thee, as not unknown,
“ Though like Count Lara now return’d alone
“ From other lands, almost a stranger grown;
“ And if from Lara’s blood and gentle birth
“ I augur right of courage and of worth,
“ He will not that untainted line belie,
“ Nor aught that knighthood may accord deny.”
“ To-morrow be it,” Ezzelin replied,
“ And here our several worth and truth be tried;
“ I gage my life, my falchion to attest 480
“ My words, so may I mingle with the blest!”

What answers Lara? to its centre shrunk

His soul, in deep abstraction sudden sunk;

The words of many, and the eyes of all

That there were gather’d seem’d on him to fall;

But his were silent, his appear’d to stray

In far forgetfulness away—away—

Alas! that heedlessness of all around
Bespoke remembrance only too profound.

XXIV.

“To-morrow!—ay, to-morrow!” further word 490
Than those repeated none from Lara heard;
Upon his brow no outward passion spoke,
From his large eye no flashing anger broke;
Yet there was something fix’d in that low tone
Which show’d resolve, determined, though unknown.
He seiz’d his cloak—his head he slightly bow’d,
And passing Ezzelin he left the crowd;
And, as he pass’d him, smiling met the frown
With which that chieftain’s brow would bear him down:
It was nor smile of mirth, nor struggling pride 500
That curbs to scorn the wrath it cannot hide;
But that of one in his own heart secure
Of all that he would do, or could endure.
Could this mean peace? the calmness of the good?
Or guilt grown old in desperate hardihood?
Alas! too like in confidence are each
For man to trust to mortal look or speech;

From deeds, and deeds alone, may he discern
Truths which it wrings the unpractised heart to learn.

XXV.

And Lara called his page, and went his way— 510
Well could that stripling word or sign obey:
His only follower from those climes afar
Where the soul glows beneath a brighter star;
For Lara left the shore from whence he sprung,
In duty patient, and sedate though young;
Silent as him he served, his faith appears
Above his station, and beyond his years.
Though not unknown the tongue of Lara's land,
In such from him he rarely heard command;
But fleet his step, and clear his tones would come, 520
When Lara's lip breath'd forth the words of home:
Those accents as his native mountains dear,
Awake their absent echoes in his ear,
Friends', kindreds', parents', wonted voice recall,
Now lost, abjured, for one—his friend, his all:
For him earth now disclosed no other guide;
What marvel then he rarely left his side?

XXVI.

Light was his form, and darkly delicate
That brow whereon his native sun had sate,
But had not marr'd, though in his beams he grew, 530
The cheek where oft the unbidden blush shone through;
Yet not such blush as mounts when health would show
All the heart's hue in that delighted glow;
But 'twas a hectic tint of secret care
That for a burning moment fevered there;
And the wild sparkle of his eye seemed caught
From high, and lightened with electric thought,
Though its black orb those long low lashes fringe,
Had tempered with a melancholy tinge;
Yet less of sorrow than of pride was there, 540
Or if 'twere grief, a grief that none should share:
And pleased not him the sports that please his age,
The tricks of youth, the frolics of the page,
For hours on Lara he would fix his glance,
As all forgotten in that watchful trance;
And from his chief withdrawn, he wandered lone,
Brief were his answers, and his questions none;

His walk the wood, his sport some foreign book;
His resting-place the bank that curbs the brook:
He seem'd, like him he served, to live apart 550
From all that lures the eye, and fills the heart;
To know no brotherhood, and take from earth
No gift beyond that bitter boon—our birth.

XXVII.

If aught he lov'd, 'twas Lara; but was shown
His faith in reverence and in deeds alone;
In mute attention; and his care, which guessed
Each wish, fulfilled it ere the tongue expressed.
Still there was haughtiness in all he did,
A spirit deep that brook'd not to be chid;
His zeal, though more than that of servile hands, 560
In act alone obeys; his air commands,
As if 'twas Lara's less than *his* desire
That thus he served, but surely not for hire.
Slight were the tasks enjoined him by his lord,
To hold the stirrup, or to bear the sword;
To tune his lute, or if he willed it more,
On tomes of other times and tongues to pore;

But ne'er to mingle with the menial train,
To whom he showed nor deference nor disdain,
But that well-worn reserve which proved he knew 570
No sympathy with that familiar crew :
His soul, whate'er his station or his stem,
Could bow to Lara, not descend to them.
Of higher birth he seemed, and better days,
Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays,
So femininely white it might bespeak
Another sex, when matched with that smooth cheek,
But for his garb, and something in his gaze,
More wild and high than woman's eye betrays ;
A latent fierceness that far more became 580
His fiery climate than his tender frame ;
True, in his words it broke not from his breast,
But from his aspect might be more than guessed.
Kaled his name, though rumour said he bore
Another ere he left his mountain-shore ;
For sometimes he would hear, however nigh,
That name repeated loud without reply,
As unfamiliar, or, if roused again,
Start to the sound, as but remembered then ;

Unless 'twas Lara's wonted voice that spake, 590
For then, ear, eyes, and heart would all awake.

XXVIII.

He had looked down upon the festive hall,
And marked that sudden strife so marked of all ;
And when the crowd around and near him told
Their wonder at the calmness of the bold,
Their marvel how the high-born Lara bore
Such insult from a stranger, doubly sore,
The colour of young Kaled went and came,
The lip of ashes, and the cheek of flame ;
And o'er his brow the dampening heart-drops threw 600
The sickening iciness of that cold dew
That rises as the busy bosom sinks
With heavy thoughts from which reflection shrinks.
Yes—there be things that we must dream and dare,
And execute ere thought be half aware :
Whate'er might Kaled's be, it was enow
To seal his lip, but agonise his brow.
He gazed on Ezzelin till Lara cast
That sidelong smile upon the knight he passed ;

When Kaled saw that smile his visage fell, 610
As if on something recognized right well ;
His memory read in such a meaning more
Than Lara's aspect unto others wore :

Forward he sprung—a moment, both were gone,
And all within that hall seem'd left alone ;
Each had so fix'd his eye on Lara's mien,
All had so mix'd their feelings with that scene,
That when his long dark shadow through the porch
No more relieves the glare of yon high torch,
Each pulse beats quicker, and all bosoms seem 620
To bound as doubting from too black a dream,
Such as we know is false, yet dread in sooth,
Because the worst is ever nearest truth.
And they are gone—but Ezzelin is there,
With thoughtful visage and imperious air ;
But long remain'd not ; ere an hour expired
He waved his hand to Otho, and retired.

XXIX.

The crowd are gone, the revellers at rest ;
The courteous host, and all-approving guest,

Again to that accustomed couch must creep 630
Where joy subsides, and sorrow sighs to sleep,
And man o'er-laboured with his being's strife,
Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life :
There lie love's feverish hope, and cunning's guile,
Hate's working brain, and lull'd ambition's wile,
O'er each vain eye oblivion's pinions wave,
And quench'd existence crouches in a grave.
What better name may slumber's bed become ?
Night's sepulchre, the universal home,
Where weakness, strength, vice, virtue, sunk supine, 640
Alike in naked helplessness recline ;
Glad for awhile to heave unconscious breath,
Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of death,
And shun, though day but dawn on ills increased,
That sleep, the loveliest, since it dreams the least.

Again to that accustomed couch must turn
 Where joy subsides, and sorrow rises to sleep
 And man a'er-laboured with his being's strife
 Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life
 There his lover's breath, and cunning's guile, and
 Hate's working brain, and hell's ambition's
 O'er each vain eye oblation's pious wars
 And quench'd existence craves in a grave
 What better name might chamber's bed become
 Night's sepulchre, the last and home
 Where weakness, strength, life, value, and repose
 Like in naked helplessness reclines
 Glad for a while to have unconscious breath
 Yet wake to wrestle with the threat of death
 And shun though they but dawn on the increase
 That sleep the lover's since it hides the least
 And thus, and thus, and thus, and thus
 And thus, and thus, and thus, and thus

LXXX

The crowd are gone, and only one
 The crowd are gone, and only one

LARA

CANTO II.

NIGHT weeps—the vapors round the mountains curl'd
Melt into morn, and Light sweetens the world.
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him o'er to better, but his last;
But mighty Nature bows as if to his birth,
The sun is in the heaven, and life on earth,
Flowers in the valley, verdure in the beam,
Health to the gale, and freshness in the stream.
Immortal man! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting, "I have not died!"

CAVATO II

LARA.

CANTO II.

I.

NIGHT wanes—the vapours round the mountains curl'd
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world.
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little, but his last;
But mighty Nature bounds as from her birth, 650
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth,
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.
Immortal man! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting inly, “they are thine!”

Gaze on, while yet thy gladdened eye may see—
A morrow comes when they are not for thee;
And grieve what may above thy senseless bier,
Nor earth nor sky will yield a single tear;
Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall fall, 660
Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee, for all;
But creeping things shall revel in their spoil,
And fit thy clay to fertilize the soil.

II.

'Tis morn—'tis noon—assembled in the hall,
The gathered chieftains come to Otho's call;
'Tis now the promised hour that must proclaim
The life or death of Lara's future fame;
When Ezzelin his charge may here unfold,
And whatsoe'er the tale, it must be told.
His faith was pledged, and Lara's promise given, 670
To meet it in the eye of man and heaven.
Why comes he not? Such truths to be divulged,
Methinks the accuser's rest is long indulged.

III.

The hour is past, and Lara too is there,
With self-confiding, coldly patient air ;
Why comes not Ezzelin? The hour is past,
And murmurs rise, and Otho's brow's o'ercast :

" I know my friend ! his faith I cannot fear,

" If yet he be on earth, expect him here ;

" The roof that held him in the valley stands 680

" Between my own and noble Lara's lands ;

" My halls from such a guest had honour gain'd,

" Nor had Sir Ezzelin his host disdain'd,

" But that some previous proof forbade his stay,

" And urged him to prepare against to-day ;

" The word I pledged for his I pledge again,

" Or will myself redeem his knighthood's stain."

He ceased—and Lara answer'd, " I am here

" To lend at thy demand a listening ear ;

" To tales of evil from a stranger's tongue, 690

" Whose words already might my heart have wrung,

" But that I deem'd him scarcely less than mad,

" Or, at the worst, a foe ignobly bad.

"I know him not—but me it seems he knew

"In lands where—but I must not trifle too:

"Produce this babbler—or redeem the pledge;

"Here in thy hold, and with thy falchion's edge."

Proud Otho on the instant, reddening, threw

His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew:

"The last alternative befits me best,

700

"And thus I answer for mine absent guest."

With cheek unchanging from its sallow gloom,

However near his own or other's tomb;

With hand, whose almost careless coolness spoke,

Its grasp well-used to deal the sabre-stroke;

With eye, though calm, determined not to spare,

Did Lara too his willing weapon bare.

In vain the circling chieftains round them closed,

For Otho's phrenzy would not be opposed;

And from his lip those words of insult fell—

710

His sword is good who can maintain them well.

IV.

Short was the conflict, furious, blindly rash,

Vain Otho gave his bosom to the gash:

He bled, and fell; but not with deadly wound,
Stretched by a dextrous sleight along the ground.
“Demand thy life!” He answered not: and then
From that red floor he ne’er had risen again,
For Lara’s brow upon the moment grew
Almost to blackness in its demon hue;
And fiercer shook his angry falchion now 720
Than when his foe’s was levelled at his brow;
Then all was stern collectedness and art,
Now rose the unleavened hatred of his heart;
So little sparing to the foe he fell’d,
That when the approaching crowd his arm withheld,
He almost turned the thirsty point on those
Who thus for mercy dared to interpose;
But to a moment’s thought that purpose bent,
Yet look’d he on him still with eye intent,
As if he loathed the ineffectual strife 730
That left a foe, howe’er o’erthrown, with life;
As if to search how far the wound he gave
Had sent its victim onward to his grave.

V.

They raised the bleeding Otho, and the Leech
Forbade all present question, sign, and speech;
The others met within a neighbouring hall,
And he, incensed and heedless of them all,
The cause and conqueror in this sudden fray,
In haughty silence slowly strode away;
He back'd his steed, his homeward path he took, 740
Nor cast on Otho's tower a single look.

VI.

But where was he? that meteor of a night,
Who menaced but to disappear with light?
Where was this Ezzelin? who came and went
To leave no other trace of his intent.
He left the dome of Otho long ere morn,
In darkness, yet so well the path was worn
He could not miss it; near his dwelling lay;
But there he was not, and with coming day
Came fast enquiry, which unfolded nought 750
Except the absence of the chief it sought;

A chamber tenantless, a steed at rest,
His host alarmed, his murmuring squires distressed
Their search extends along, around the path,
In dread to meet the marks of prowlers' wrath:
But none are there, and not a brake hath borne
Nor gout of blood, nor shred of mantle torn;
Nor fall nor struggle hath defaced the grass,
Which still retains a mark where murder was;
Nor dabbling fingers left to tell the tale, 760
The bitter print of each convulsive nail,
When agonized hands that cease to guard,
Wound in that pang the smoothness of the sword.
Some such had been, if here a life was left,
But these were not; and doubting hope is left;
And strange suspicion, whispering Lara's name,
Now daily mutters o'er his blackened fame;
Then sudden silent when his form appeared,
Awaits the absence of the thing it feared
Again its wonted wondering to renew, 770
And dye conjecture with a darker hue.

VII.

Days roll along, and Otho's wounds are healed,
But not his pride; and hate no more concealed:
He was a man of power, and Lara's foe,
The friend of all who sought to work him woe,
And from his country's justice now demands
Account of Ezzelin at Lara's hands.
Who else than Lara could have cause to fear
His presence? who had made him disappear,
If not the man on whom his menaced charge 780
Had sate too deeply were he left at large?
The general rumour, ignorantly loud,
The mystery, dearest to the curious crowd;
The seeming friendlessness of him who strove
To win no confidence, and wake no love;
The sweeping fierceness which his soul betray'd,
The skill with which he wielded his keen blade;
Where had his arm unwarlike caught that art?
Where had that fierceness grown upon his heart?
For it was not the blind capricious rage 790
A word can kindle and a word assuage,

But the deep working of a soul unmix'd
With aught of pity where its wrath had fix'd;
Such as long power and overgorged success
Concentrates into all that's merciless:
These, link'd with that desire which ever sways
Mankind the rather to condemn than praise,
'Gainst Lara gathering raised at length a storm,
Such as himself might fear, and foes would form;
And he must answer for the absent head 800
Of one that haunts him still, alive or dead.

VIII.

Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who worked his wantonness in form of law;
Long war without and frequent broil within
Had made a path for blood and giant sin,
That waited but a signal to begin
New havock, such as civil discord blends,
Which knows no neuter, owns but foes or friends: 810

Fix'd in his feudal fortress each was lord,
In word and deed obeyed, in soul abhorr'd.
Thus Lara had inherited his lands,
And with them pining hearts and sluggish hands;
But that long absence from his native clime
Had left him stainless of oppression's crime,
And now diverted by his milder sway,
All dread by slow degrees had worn away;
The menials felt their usual awe alone,
But more for him than them that fear was grown; 820
They deem'd him now unhappy, though at first
Their evil judgment augur'd of the worst,
And each long restless night and silent mood
Was traced to sickness, fed by solitude;
And though his lonely habits threw of late
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his gate;
For thence the wretched ne'er unsoothed withdrew;
For them, at least, his soul compassion knew:
Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
The humble passed not his unheeding eye; 830
Much he would speak not, but beneath his roof
They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof;

And they who watched might mark that day by day,
Some new retainers gathered to his sway;
But most of late since Ezzelin was lost
He played the courteous lord and bounteous host :
Perchance his strife with Otho made him dread
Some snare prepared for his obnoxious head;
Whate'er his view, his favour more obtains
With these, the people, than his fellow thanes. 840
If this were policy, so far 'twas sound,
The million judged but of him as they found;
From him by sterner chiefs to exile driven
They but required a shelter, and 'twas given :
By him no peasant mourn'd his rifled cot,
And scarce the Serf could murmur o'er his lot;
With him old avarice found its hoard secure,
With him contempt forbore to mock the poor;
Youth present cheer and promised recompence
Detained, till all too late to part from thence : 850
To hate he offered with the coming change
The deep reversion of delayed revenge;
To love, long baffled by the unequal match,
The well-won charms success was sure to snatch.

All now was ripe, he waits but to proclaim
That slavery nothing which was still a name.
The moment came, the hour when Otho thought
Secure at last the vengeance which he sought :
His summons found the destined criminal
Begirt by thousands in his swarming hall, 860
Fresh from their feudal fetters newly riven,
Defying earth, and confident of heaven.
That morning he had freed the soil-bound slaves,
Who dig no land for tyrants but their graves!
Such is their cry—some watchword for the fight
Must vindicate the wrong, and warp the right :
Religion—freedom—vengeance—what you will,
A word's enough to raise mankind to kill ;
Some factious phrase by cunning caught and spread
That guilt may reign, and wolves and worms be fed ! 870

IX.

Throughout that clime the feudal chiefs had gain'd
Such sway, their infant monarch hardly reign'd ;
Now was the hour for faction's rebel growth,
The Serfs contemn'd the one, and hated both :

They waited but a leader, and they found
One to their cause inseparably bound ;
By circumstance compell'd to plunge again
In self-defence amidst the strife of men.
Cut off by some mysterious fate from those
Whom birth and nature meant not for his foes, 880
Had Lara from that night, to him accurst,
Prepared to meet, but not alone, the worst :
Some reason urged, whate'er it was, to shun
Enquiry into deeds at distance done ;
By mingling with his own the cause of all,
E'en if he failed, he still delayed his fall.
The sullen calm that long his bosom kept,
The storm that once had spent itself and slept,
Roused by events that seemed foredoom'd to urge
His gloomy fortunes to their utmost verge, 890
Burst forth, and made him all he once had been,
And is again ; he only changed the scene.
Light care had he for life, and less for fame,
But not less fitted for the desperate game :
He deem'd himself mark'd out for other's hate,
And mock'd at ruin so they shared his fate.

What cared he for the freedom of the crowd?
He raised the humble but to bend the proud,
He had hoped quiet in his sullen lair,
But man and destiny beset him there: 900
Inured to hunters he was found at bay,
And they must kill, they cannot snare the prey.
Stern, unambitious, silent, he had been
Henceforth a calm spectator of life's scene;
But dragg'd again upon the arena, stood
A leader not unequal to the feud;
In voice—mien—gesture—savage nature spoke,
And from his eye the gladiator broke.

X.

What boots the oft-repeated tale of strife,
The feast of vultures, and the waste of life? 910
The varying fortune of each separate field,
The fierce that vanquish, and the faint that yield?
The smoking ruin, and the crumbled wall?
In this the struggle was the same with all;
Save that distempered passions lent their force
In bitterness that banished all remorse.

None sued, for Mercy knew her cry was vain,
The captive died upon the battle-slain:
In either cause one rage alone possessed
The empire of the alternate victor's breast; 920
And they that smote for freedom or for sway
Deem'd few were slain, while more remain'd to slay.
It was too late to check the wasting brand,
And Desolation reaped the famished land;
The torch was lighted, and the flame was spread,
And Carnage smiled upon her daily dead.

XI.

Fresh with the nerve the new-born impulse strung,
The first success to Lara's numbers clung;
But that vain victory hath ruined all,
They form no longer to their leader's call; 930
In blind confusion on the foe they press,
And think to snatch is to secure success.
The lust of booty and the thirst of hate
Lure on the broken brigands to their fate;
In vain he doth whate'er a chief may do
To check the headlong fury of that crew;

In vain their stubborn ardour he would tame,
The hand that kindles cannot quench the flame;
The wary foe alone hath turn'd their mood,
And shown their rashness to that erring brood: 940
The feign'd retreat, the nightly ambuscade,
The daily harass, and the fight delayed,
The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer's art,
And palls the patience of his baffled heart,
Of these they had not deem'd: the battle-day
They could encounter as a veteran may;
But more preferred the fury of the strife,
And present death to hourly suffering life: 950
And famine wrings, and fever sweeps away
His numbers melting fast from their array;
Intemperate triumph fades to discontent,
And Lara's soul alone seems still unbent:
But few remain to aid his voice and hand,
And thousands dwindled to a scanty band:
Desperate, though few, the last and best remain'd
To mourn the discipline they late disdain'd.

One hope survives, the frontier is not far,
And thence they may escape from native war; 960
And bear within them to the neighbouring state
An exile's sorrows, or an outlaw's hate:
Hard is the task their father-land to quit,
But harder still to perish or submit.

XII.

It is resolved—they march—consenting Night
Guides with her star their dim and torchless flight;
Already they perceive its tranquil beam
Sleep on the surface of the barrier stream;
Already they descry—Is yon the bank?
Away! 'tis lined with many a hostile rank. 970
Return or fly!—What glitters in the rear?
'Tis Otho's banner—the pursuer's spear!
Are those the shepherds' fires upon the height?
Alas! they blaze too widely for the flight:
Cut off from hope, and compass'd in the toil,
Less blood perchance hath bought a richer spoil!

XIII.

A moment's pause ; 'tis but to breathe their band,
Or shall they onward press, or here withstand?
It matters little—if they charge the foes
Who by the border-stream their march oppose, 980
Some few, perchance, may break and pass the line,
However link'd to baffle such design.

“ The charge be ours! to wait for their assault

“ Were fate well worthy of a coward's halt.”

Forth flies each sabre, reined is every steed,
And the next word shall scarce outstrip the deed :
In the next tone of Lara's gathering breath
How many shall but hear the voice of death !

XIV.

His blade is bared, in him there is an air
As deep, but far too tranquil for despair ; 990
A something of indifference more than then
Becomes the bravest if they feel for men—
He turned his eye on Kaled, ever near,
And still too faithful to betray one fear ;
Perchance 'twas but the moon's dim twilight threw
Along his aspect an unwonted hue

Of mournful paleness, whose deep tint expressed
The truth, and not the terror of his breast.
This Lara mark'd, and laid his hand on his:
It trembled not in such an hour as this; 1000
His lip was silent, scarcely beat his heart,
His eye alone proclaim'd, "We will not part!
"Thy band may perish, or thy friends may flee,
"Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee!"
The word hath pass'd his lips, and onward driven
Pours the link'd band through ranks asunder riven;
Well has each steed obeyed the armed heel,
And flash the scimitars, and rings the steel;
Outnumber'd not outbrav'd, they still oppose
Despair to daring, and a front to foes; 1010
And blood is mingled with the dashing stream,
Which runs all redly till the morning beam.

XV.

Commanding, aiding, animating all,
Where foe appeared to press, or friend to fall,
Cheers Lara's voice, and waves or strikes his steel,
Inspiring hope himself had ceased to feel.

None fled, for well they knew that flight were vain,
But those that waver turn to smite again
While yet they find the firmest of the foe
Recoil before their leader's look and blow; 1020
Now girt with numbers, now almost alone,
He foils their ranks, or reunites his own;
Himself he spared not—once they seemed to fly—
Now was the time, he waved his hand on high,
And shook—why sudden droops that plumed crest?
The shaft is sped—the arrow's in his breast!
That fatal gesture left the unguarded side,
And Death hath stricken down yon arm of pride.
The word of triumph fainted from his tongue;
That hand, so raised, how droopingly it hung! 1030
But yet the sword instinctively retains,
Though from its fellow shrink the falling reins;
These Kaled snatches: dizzy with the blow,
And senseless bending o'er his saddle-bow,
Perceives not Lara that his anxious page
Beguiles his charger from the combat's rage:
Meantime his followers charge, and charge again;
Too mix'd the slayers now to heed the slain!

XVI.

Day glimmers on the dying and the dead,
The cloven cuirass, and the helmless head; 1040
The war-horse masterless is on the earth,
And that last gasp hath burst his bloody girth;
And near yet quivering with what life remain'd,
The heel that urg'd him and the hand that rein'd;
And some too near that rolling torrent lie,
Whose waters mock the lip of those that die;
That panting thirst which scorches in the breath
Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,
In vain impels the burning mouth to crave
One drop—the last—to cool it for the grave; 1050
With feeble and convulsive effort swept
Their limbs along the crimson'd turf have crept;
The faint remains of life such struggles waste,
But yet they reach the stream, and bend to taste:
They feel its freshness, and almost partake—
Why pause?—No further thirst have they to slake—
It is unquench'd, and yet they feel it not;
It was an agony—but now forgot!

XVII.

Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never been, 1060
A breathing but devoted warrior lay :
'Twas Lara bleeding fast from life away.
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled watchful o'er his welling side,
And with his scarf would staunch the tides that rush
With each convulsion in a blacker gush ;
And then as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow :
He scarce can speak, but motions him 'tis vain,
And merely adds another throb to pain. 1070
He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees ;
Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though dim,
Held all the light that shone on earth for him.

XVIII.

The foe arrives, who long had search'd the field,
Their triumph nought till Lara too should yield ;

They would remove him, but they see 'twere vain,
And he regards them with a calm disdain, 1080
That rose to reconcile him with his fate,
And that escape to death from living hate :
And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,
Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,
And questions of his state ; he answers not,
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,
And turns to Kaled :—each remaining word,
They understood not, if distinctly heard ;
His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung. 1090
They spake of other scenes, but what—is known
To Kaled, whom their meaning reach'd alone ;
And he replied, though faintly, to their sound,
While gaz'd the rest in dumb amazement round :
They seem'd even then—that twain—unto the last
To half forget the present in the past ;
To share between themselves some separate fate,
Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.

XIX.

Their words though faint were many—from the tone
Their import those who heard could judge alone; 1100
From this, you might have deem'd young Kaled's death
More near than Lara's by his voice and breath,
So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke
The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke;
But Lara's voice though low, at first was clear
And calm, till murmuring death gasp'd hoarsely near:
But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,
Save that when struggling nearer to his last,
Upon that page his eye was kindly cast; 1110
And once as Kaled's answering accents ceas'd,
Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East:
Whether (as then the breaking sun from high
Roll'd back the clouds) the morrow caught his eye,
Or that 'twas chance, or some remember'd scene
That rais'd his arm to point where such had been,
Scarce Kaled seem'd to know, but turn'd away,
As if his heart abhorred that coming day,

And shrunk his glance before that morning light
To look on Lara's brow—where all grew night. 1120
Yet sense seem'd left, though better were its loss;
For when one near display'd the absolving cross,
And proffered to his touch the holy bead
Of which his parting soul might own the need,
He look'd upon it with an eye profane,
And smiled—Heaven pardon! if 'twere with disdain;
And Kaled though he spoke not, nor withdrew
From Lara's face his fix'd despairing view,
With brow repulsive, and with gesture swift,
Flung back the hand which held the sacred gift, 1130
As if such but disturbed the expiring man,
Nor seem'd to know his life but *then* began,
The life immortal, infinite, secure,
To all for whom that cross hath made it sure!

XX.

But gasping heav'd the breath that Lara drew,
And dull the film along his dim eye grew;
His limbs stretch'd fluttering, and his head droop'd o'er
The weak yet still untiring knee that bore;

He press'd the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more, but Kaled will not part 1140
With the cold grasp, but feels, and feels in vain,
For that faint throb which answers not again.
“It beats!”—Away, thou dreamer! he is gone—
It once was Lara which thou look'st upon.

XXI.

He gaz'd, as if not yet had pass'd away
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;
And those around have rous'd him from his trance,
But cannot tear from thence his fixed glance;
And when in raising him from where he bore
Within his arms the form that felt no more, 1150
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,
Roll down like earth to earth upon the plain;
He did not dash himself thereby, nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze, but reel'd and fell,
Scarce breathing more than that he lov'd so well—
Than that *he* lov'd! Oh! never yet beneath
The breast of man such trusty love may breathe!

That trying moment hath at once reveal'd
The secret long and yet but half-conceal'd; 1160
In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seem'd ended, but the sex confest;
And life return'd, and Kaled felt no shame—
What now to her was Womanhood or Fame?

XXII.

And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep,
But where he died his grave was dug as deep;
Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,
Though priest nor bless'd, nor marble deck'd the mound;
And he was mourn'd by one whose quiet grief,
Less loud, outlasts a people's for their chief. 1170
Vain was all question ask'd her of the past,
And vain e'en menace—silent to the last,
She told nor whence nor why she left behind
Her all for one who seem'd but little kind.
Why did she love him? Curious fool!—be still—
Is human love the growth of human will?
To her he might be gentleness; the stern
Have deeper thoughts than your dull eyes discern,

And when they love, your smilers guess not how
Beats the strong heart, though less the lips avow. 1180
They were not common links that form'd the chain
That bound to Lara Kaled's heart and brain;
But that wild tale she brook'd not to unfold,
And seal'd is now each lip that could have told.

XXIII.

They laid him in the earth, and on his breast,
Besides the wound that sent his soul to rest,
They found the scatter'd dints of many a scar
Which were not planted there in recent war;
Where'er had pass'd his summer years of life
It seems they vanish'd in a land of strife; 1190
But all unknown his glory or his guilt,
These only told that somewhere blood was spilt,
And Ezzelin, who might have spoke the past,
Return'd no more—that night appear'd his last.

XXIV.

Upon that night (a peasant's is the tale)
A Serf that cross'd the intervening vale,

When Cynthia's light almost gave way to morn,
And nearly veil'd in mist her waning horn;
A Serf, that rose betimes to thread the wood,
And hew the bough that bought his children's food, 1200
Pass'd by the river that divides the plain
Of Otho's lands and Lara's broad domain:
He heard a tramp—a horse and horseman broke
From out the wood—before him was a cloak
Wrapt round some burthen at his saddle-bow,
Bent was his head, and hidden was his brow.
Rous'd by the sudden sight at such a time,
And some foreboding that it might be crime,
Himself unheeded watch'd the stranger's course,
Who reach'd the river, bounded from his horse, 1210
And lifting thence the burthen which he bore,
Heav'd up the bank, and dash'd it from the shore,
Then paused, and look'd, and turn'd, and seem'd to watch,
And still another hurried glance would snatch,
And follow with his step the stream that flow'd,
As if even yet too much its surface show'd:
At once he started, stoop'd, around him strown
The winter floods had scattered heaps of stone ;

Of these the heaviest thence he gather'd there,
And slung them with a more than common care. 1220
Meantime the Serf had crept to where unseen
Himself might safely mark what this might mean;
He caught a glimpse, as of a floating breast,
And something glittered starlike on the vest,
But ere he well could mark the buoyant trunk,
A massy fragment smote it, and it sunk:
It rose again but indistinct to view,
And left the waters of a purple hue,
Then deeply disappear'd: the horseman gaz'd
Till ebb'd the latest eddy it had rais'd; 1230
Then turning, vaulted on his pawing steed,
And instant spurr'd him into panting speed.
His face was mask'd—the features of the dead,
If dead it were, escaped the observer's dread;
But if in sooth a star its bosom bore,
Such is the badge that knighthood ever wore,
And such 'tis known Sir Ezzelin had worn
Upon the night that led to such a morn.
If thus he perish'd, Heaven receive his soul!
His undiscover'd limbs to ocean roll; 1240

And charity upon the hope would dwell
It was not Lara's hand by which he fell.

XXV.

And Kaled—Lara—Ezzelin, are gone,
Alike without their monumental stone!
The first, all efforts vainly strove to wean
From lingering where her chieftain's blood had been,
Grief had so tam'd a spirit once too proud,
Her tears were few, her wailing never loud;
But furious would you tear her from the spot
Where yet she scarce believ'd that he was not, 1250
Her eye shot forth with all the living fire
That haunts the tigress in her whelpless ire;
But left to waste her weary moments there,
She talk'd all idly unto shapes of air,
Such as the busy brain of Sorrow paints,
And woos to listen to her fond complaints:
And she would sit beneath the very tree
Where lay his drooping head upon her knee;
And in that posture where she saw him fall,
His words, his looks, his dying grasp recall; 1260

And she had shorn, but sav'd her raven hair,
And oft would snatch it from her bosom there,
And fold, and press it gently to the ground,
As if she staunch'd anew some phantom's wound.
Herself would question, and for him reply;
Then rising, start, and beckon him to fly
From some imagin'd spectre in pursuit;
Then seat her down upon some linden's root,
And hide her visage with her meagre hand,
Or trace strange characters along the sand— 1270
This could not last—she lies by him she lov'd;
Her tale untold—her truth too dearly prov'd.

THE END.

THE
SIEGE OF CORINTH.

A POEM.

SIEGE OF CORINTH.
PARISINA.

A POEM.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1816.

SIEGE OF CORINTH

A POEM

PARIS IN A

A POEM

—

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1816

JOHN ROBERTS, ESQ.

THE

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

“Guns, Trumpets, Blunderbusses, Drums, and Thunder.”

THE
SIEGE OF CORINTH.

"Guns, Trunks, Blunderbusses, Drums and Thunders."

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS

FRIEND.

Jan. 22, 1816.

* Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitan, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1816-17; and in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Achaia to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness, but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Egina, Poros, &c. and the coast of the continent.

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS

FRIEND,

JAN 25 1816

ADVERTISEMENT.

“THE grand army of the Turks (in 1715), under the
“ Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way into the
“ heart of the Morea, and to form the siege of Napoli di
“ Romania, the most considerable place in all that coun-
“ try*, thought it best in the first place to attack Corinth,
“ upon which they made several storms. The garrison
“ being weakened, and the governor seeing it was impos-
“ sible to hold out against so mighty a force, thought fit
“ to beat a parley: but while they were treating about
“ the articles, one of the magazines in the Turkish camp,
“ wherein they had six hundred barrels of powder, blew

* Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810-11; and in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness, but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poro, &c. and the coast of the continent.

ADVERTISEMENT.

“ up by accident, whereby six or seven hundred men
“ were killed: which so enraged the infidels, that they
“ would not grant any capitulation, but stormed the
“ place with so much fury, that they took it, and put
“ most of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the gover-
“ nor, to the sword. The rest, with Antonio Bembo,
“ proveditor extraordinary, were made prisoners of war.”

History of the Turks, vol. iii. p. 151.

THE

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

I.

MANY a vanished year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth; yet she stands
A fortress formed to Freedom's hands.
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock, 5
Have left untouched her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,
The land-mark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side, 10
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled,

Or baffled Persia's despot fled, 15
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,
That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below :
Or could the bones of all the slain, 20
Who perished there, be piled again,
That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,
Than yon tower-capt Acropolis
Which seems the very clouds to kiss. 25

II.

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears ;
And downward to the Isthmian plain
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitched, the crescent shines 30
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines ;
And the dusk Spahi's bands advance
Beneath each bearded pasha's glance ;
And far and wide as eye can reach
The turban'd cohorts throng the beach ; 35

And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the Tartar wheels;
The Turcoman hath left his herd¹,
The sabre round his loins to gird;
And there the volleying thunders pour, 40
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far hissing globe of death;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball; 45
And from that wall the foe replies,
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III.

But near and nearest to the wall 50
Of those who wish and work its fall,
With deeper skill in war's black art
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
As any chief that ever stood
Triumphant in the fields of blood; 55
From post to post, and deed to deed,
Fast spurring on his reeking steed,

Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
 And make the foremost Moslem quail;
 Or where the battery guarded well, 60
 Remains as yet impregnable,
 Alighting cheerly to inspire
 The soldier slackening in his fire;
 The first and freshest of the host
 Which Stamboul's sultan there can boast, 65
 To guide the follower o'er the field,
 To point the tube, the lance to wield,
 Or whirl around the bickering blade;—
 Was Alp, the Adrian renegade!

IV.

From Venice—once a race of worth 70
 His gentle sires—he drew his birth;
 But late an exile from her shore,
 Against his countrymen he bore
 The arms they taught to bear; and now
 The turban girt his shaven brow. 75
 Through many a change had Corinth passed
 With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
 And here, before her walls, with those
 To Greece and Venice equal foes,

He stood a foe, with all the zeal 80
 Which young and fiery converts feel,
 Within whose heated bosom throngs
 The memory of a thousand wrongs.
 To him had Venice ceased to be
 Her ancient civic boast—"the Free;" 85
 And in the palace of St. Mark
 Unnamed accusers in the dark
 Within the "Lion's mouth" had placed
 A charge against him uneffaced:
 He fled in time, and saved his life, 90
 To waste his future years in strife,
 That taught his land how great her loss
 In him who triumphed o'er the Cross,
 'Gainst which he reared the Crescent high,
 And battled to avenge or die. 95

V.

Coumourgi²—he whose closing scene
 Adorned the triumph of Eugene,
 When on Carlowitz' bloody plain
 The last and mightiest of the slain
 He sank, regretting not to die, 100
 But curst the Christian's victory—

Coumourgi—can his glory cease,
 That latest conqueror of Greece,
 Till Christian hands to Greece restore
 The freedom Venice gave of yore? 105
 A hundred years have rolled away
 Since he refixed the Moslem's sway;
 And now he led the Mussulman,
 And gave the guidance of the van
 To Alp, who well repaid the trust 110
 By cities levelled with the dust;
 And proved, by many a deed of death,
 How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI.

The walls grew weak; and fast and hot
 Against them poured the ceaseless shot, 115
 With unabating fury sent
 From battery to battlement;
 And thunder-like the pealing din
 Rose from each heated culverin;
 And here and there some crackling dome 120
 Was fired before the exploding bomb:
 And as the fabric sank beneath
 The shattering shell's volcanic breath,

In red and wreathing columns flashed
The flame, as loud the ruin crashed, 125
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven;
Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew 130
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII.

But not for vengeance, long delayed,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach
His skill to pierce the promised breach: 135
Within these walls a maid was pent
His hope would win, without consent
Of that inexorable sire,
Whose heart refused him in its ire,
When Alp, beneath his Christian name, 140
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.
In happier mood, and earlier time,
While unimpeached for traitorous crime,
Gayest in gondola or hall,
He glittered through the Carnival; 145

And tuned the softest serenade
That e'er on Adria's waters played
At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII.

And many deemed her heart was won;
For sought by numbers, given to none, 150
Had young Francesca's hand remained
Still by the church's bonds unchained:
And when the Adriatic bore
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail, 155
And pensive waxed the maid and pale;
More constant at confessional,
More rare at masque and festival;
Or seen at such, with downcast eyes,
Which conquered hearts they ceased to prize: 160
With listless look she seems to gaze;
With humbler care her form arrays;
Her voice less lively in the song;
Her step, though light, less fleet among
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance 165
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

IX.

Sent by the state to guard the land,
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
While Sobieski tamed his pride
By Buda's wall and Danube's side, 170
The chiefs of Venice wrung away
From Patra to Eubœa's bay,)
Minotti held in Corinth's towers
The Doge's delegated powers,
While yet the pitying eye of Peace 175
Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece:
And ere that faithless truce was broke
Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,
With him his gentle daughter came;
Nor there, since Menelaus' dame 180
Forsook her lord and land, to prove
What woes await on lawless love,
Had fairer form adorned the shore
Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn; 185
And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,

O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
 The foremost of the fierce assault.
 The bands are ranked; the chosen van
 Of Tartar and of Mussulman, 190
 The full of hope, misnamed "forlorn,"
 Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
 And win their way with falchions' force,
 Or pave the path with many a corse,
 O'er which the following brave may rise, 195
 Their stepping-stone—the last who dies!

XI.

'Tis midnight: on the mountain's brown
 The cold, round moon shines deeply down;
 Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
 Spreads like an ocean hung on high, 200
 Bespangled with those isles of light,
 So wildly, spiritually bright;
 Who ever gazed upon them shining,
 And turned to earth without repining,
 Nor wished for wings to flee away, 205
 And mix with their eternal ray?
 The waves on either shore lay there
 Calm, clear, and azure as the air;

And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmured meekly as the brook. 210

The winds were pillowed on the waves;

The banners drooped along their staves,

And, as they fell around them furling,

Above them shone the crescent curling;

And that deep silence was unbroke, 215

Save where the watch his signal spoke,

Save where the steed neighed oft and shrill,

And echo answered from the hill,

And the wide hum of that wild host

Rustled like leaves from coast to coast, 220

As rose the Muezzin's voice in air

In midnight call to wonted prayer;

It rose, that chaunted mournful strain,

Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain:

'Twas musical, but sadly sweet, 225

Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,

And take a long unmeasured tone,

To mortal minstrelsy unknown.

It seemed to those within the wall

A cry prophetic of their fall: 230

It struck even the besieger's ear

With something ominous and drear,

An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed 235
Of that strange sense it's silence framed;
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

XII.

The tent of Alp was on the shore;
The sound was hushed, the prayer was o'er; 240
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obeyed:
'Tis but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay, 245
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll. 250
He stood alone among the host;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the crescent o'er the cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,

Secure in paradise to be 255

By Houris loved immortally :

Nor his, what burning patriots feel,

The stern exaltedness of zeal,

Profuse of blood, untired in toil,

When battling on the parent soil. 260

He stood alone—a renegade

Against the country he betrayed ;

He stood alone amidst his band,

Without a trusted heart or hand :

They followed him, for he was brave, 265

And great the spoil he got and gave ;

They crouched to him, for he had skill

To warp and wield the vulgar will :

But still his Christian origin

With them was little less than sin. 270

They envied even the faithless fame

He earned beneath a Moslem name ;

Since he, their mightiest chief, had been

In youth a bitter Nazarene.

They did not know how pride can stoop, 275

When baffled feelings withering droop ;

They did not know how hate can burn

In hearts once changed from soft to stern ;

Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel. 280
He ruled them—man may rule the worst,
By ever daring to be first:
So lions o'er the jackal sway;
The jackal points, he fells the prey,
Then on the vulgar yelling press, 285
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII.

His head grows fevered, and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose; 290
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
Awoke him with a sunken heart.
The turban on his hot brow pressed,
The mail weighed lead-like on his breast,
Though oft and long beneath its weight 295
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,
Without or couch or canopy,
Except a rougher field and sky
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
Than now along the heaven was spread. 300

He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day,
But walked him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strewed the strand.
What pillowed them? and why should he 305
More wakeful than the humblest be?
Since more their peril, worse their toil,
And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
While he alone, where thousands passed
A night of sleep, perchance their last, 310
In sickly vigil wandered on,
And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV.

He felt his soul become more light
Beneath the freshness of the night.
Cool was the silent sky, though calm, 315
And bathed his brow with airy balm:
Behind, the camp—before him lay,
In many a winding creek and bay,
Lepanto's gulf; and, on the brow
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow, 320
High and eternal, such as shone
Through thousand summers brightly gone,

Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
It will not melt, like man, to time:
Tyrant and slave are swept away, 325
Less formed to wear before the ray;
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,
While tower and tree are torn and rent,
Shines o'er its craggy battlement; 330
In form a peak, in height a cloud,
In texture like a hovering shroud,
Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
As from her fond abode she fled,
And lingered on the spot, where long 335
Her prophet spirit spake in song.
Oh, still her step at moments falters
O'er withered fields, and ruined altars,
And fain would wake, in souls too broken,
By pointing to each glorious token. 340
But vain her voice, till better days
Dawn in those yet remembered rays
Which shone upon the Persian flying,
And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times 345
Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes ;
And through this night, as on he wandered,
And o'er the past and present pondered,
And thought upon the glorious dead
Who there in better cause had bled, 350
He felt how faint and feebly dim
The fame that could accrue to him,
Who cheered the band, and waved the sword,
A traitor in a turbaned horde ;
And led them to the lawless siege, 355
Whose best success were sacrilege.
Not so had those his fancy numbered,
The chiefs whose dust around him slumbered ;
Their phalanx marshalled on the plain,
Whose bulwarks were not then in vain. 360
They fell devoted, but undying ;
The very gale their names seemed sighing :
The waters murmured of their name ;
The woods were peopled with their fame ;
The silent pillar, lone and gray, 365
Claimed kindred with their sacred clay ;

Their spirits wrapt the dusky mountain,
Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain ;
The meanest rill, the mightiest river
Rolled mingling with their fame for ever. 370
Despite of every yoke she bears,
That land is glory's still and theirs !
'Tis still a watch-word to the earth.
When man would do a deed of worth,
He points to Greece, and turns to tread, 375
So sanctioned, on the tyrant's head :
He looks to her, and rushes on
Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
And wooed the freshness Night diffused. 380
There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea³,
Which changeless rolls eternally ;
So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood ;
And the powerless moon beholds them flow, 385
Heedless if she come or go :
Calm or high, in main or bay,
On their course she hath no sway.

The rock unworn its base doth bare,
And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there; 390
And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
On the line that it left long ages ago:
A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.

He wandered on, along the beach, 395
Till within the range of a carbine's reach
Of the leaguered wall; but they saw him not,
Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot?
Did traitors lurk in the Christians' hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts waxed
cold? 400

I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flashed no fire, and there hissed no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flanked the sea-ward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel, 406
As his measured step on the stone below
Clanked, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival, 410

Gorging and growling o'er carcase and limb ;

They were too busy to bark at him !

From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh,

As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh ; 414

And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull⁴,

As it slipped through their jaws, when their edge
grew dull,

As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,

When they scarce could rise from the spot where
they fed ;

So well had they broken a lingering fast

With those who had fallen for that night's repast. 420

And Alp knew, by the turbans that rolled on the sand,

The foremost of these were the best of his band :

Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,

And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair⁵,

All the rest was shaven and bare. 425

The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,

The hair was tangled round his jaw.

But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,

There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,

Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away, 430

Scared by the dogs, from the human prey ;

But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Picked by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

XVII.

Alp turned him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight; 435
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorched with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.
There is something of pride in the perilous hour, 440
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower;
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honour's eye on daring deeds!
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead, 445
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands, 450
Fashioned by long forgotten hands;

Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before! 455
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be:
What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have passed away, 460
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay!

XIX.

He sate him down at a pillar's base,
And passed his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude; 465
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fevered, throbbing, and opprest;
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see 470
Your own run over the ivory key,
Ere the measured tone is taken
By the chords you would awaken.

There he sate all heavily,
 As he heard the night-wind sigh. 475
 Was it the wind, through some hollow stone⁶,
 Sent that soft and tender moan?
 He lifted his head, and he looked on the sea,
 But it was unrippled as glass may be;
 He looked on the long grass—it waved not a blade;
 How was that gentle sound conveyed? 481
 He looked to the banners—each flag lay still,
 So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,
 And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
 What did that sudden sound bespeak? 485
 He turned to the left—is he sure of sight?
 There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX.

He started up with more of fear
 Than if an armed foe were near.
 “God of my fathers! what is here? 490
 “Who art thou, and wherefore sent
 “So near a hostile armament?”
 His trembling hands refused to sign
 The cross he deemed no more divine:

He had resumed it in that hour, 495

But conscience wrung away the power.

He gazed, he saw : he knew the face

Of beauty, and the form of grace ;

It was Francesca by his side,

The maid who might have been his bride ! 500

The rose was yet upon her cheek,

But mellowed with a tenderer streak :

Where was the play of her soft lips fled ?

Gone was the smile that enlivened their red.

The ocean's calm within their view, 505

Beside her eye had less of blue ;

But like that cold wave it stood still,

And its glance, though clear, was chill.

Around her form a thin robe twining,

Nought concealed her bosom shining ; 510

Through the parting of her hair,

Floating darkly downward there,

Her rounded arm showed white and bare :

And ere yet she made reply,

Once she raised her hand on high ; 515

It was so wan, and transparent of hue,

You might have seen the moon shine through.

XXI.

- “ I come from my rest to him I love best,
“ That I may be happy, and he may be blest.
“ I have passed the guards, the gate, the wall; 520
“ Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
“ 'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
“ From a maid in the pride of her purity;
“ And the Power on high, that can shield the good
“ Thus from the tyrant of the wood, 525
“ Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
“ From the hands of the leaguering infidel.
“ I come—and if I come in vain,
“ Never, oh never, we meet again!
“ Thou hast done a fearful deed 530
“ In falling away from thy father's creed:
“ But dash that turban to earth, and sign
“ The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine;
“ Wring the black drop from thy heart,
“ And to-morrow unites us no more to part.” 535
“ And where should our bridal couch be spread?
“ In the 'midst of the dying and the dead?

“ For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
“ The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.
“ None, save thou and thine, I’ve sworn 540
“ Shall be left upon the morn :
“ But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
“ Where our hands shall be joined, and our sorrow
 forgot.
“ There thou yet shalt be my bride,
“ When once again I’ve quelled the pride 545
“ Of Venice ; and her hated race
“ Have felt the arm they would debase
“ Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
“ Whom vice and envy made my foes.”

Upon his hand she laid her own— 550
Light was the touch, but it thrilled to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,
Which fixed him beyond the power to start.
Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,
He could not loose him from its hold ; 555
But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,
As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.

The feverish glow of his brow was gone, 560
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,
As he looked on the face, and beheld its hue
So deeply changed from what he knew :
Fair but faint—without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play 565
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day ;
And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her breath,
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,
And there seemed not a pulse in her veins to dwell.
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fixed, 571
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmixed
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream ;
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare 575
Stirred by the breath of the wintry air,
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight ;
As they seem, through the dimness, about to come
down
From the shadowy wall where their images frown ;

Fearfully flitting to and fro, 581

As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

“ If not for love of me be given

“ Thus much, then, for the love of heaven,—

“ Again I say—that turban tear 585

“ From off thy faithless brow, and swear

“ Thine injured country’s sons to spare,

“ Or thou art lost; and never shalt see

“ Not earth—that’s past—but heaven or me.

“ If this thou dost accord, albeit 590

“ A heavy doom ’tis thine to meet,

“ That doom shall half absolve thy sin,

“ And mercy’s gate may receive thee within:

“ But pause one moment more, and take

“ The curse of him thou didst forsake; 595

“ And look once more to heaven, and see

“ Its love for ever shut from thee.

“ There is a light cloud by the moon—⁷

“ ’Tis passing, and will pass full soon—

“ If, by the time its vapoury sail 600

“ Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,

“ Thy heart within thee is not changed,

“ Then God and man are both avenged;

“Dark will thy doom be, darker still
“Thine immortality of ill.” 605

Alp looked to heaven, and saw on high
The sign she spake of in the sky;
But his heart was swollen, and turned aside,
By deep interminable pride.
This first false passion of his breast 610

Rolled like a torrent o’er the rest.
He sue for mercy! *He* dismayed
By wild words of a timid maid!
He, wronged by Venice, vow to save
Her sons, devoted to the grave! 615
No—though that cloud were thunder’s worst,
And charged to crush him—let it burst!

He looked upon it earnestly,
Without an accent of reply;
He watched it passing; it is flown: 620

Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
And thus he spake—“Whate’er my fate,
“I am no changeling—’tis too late:
“The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
“Then rise again; the tree must shiver. 625

“ What Venice made me, I must be,

“ Her foe in all, save love to thee :

“ But thou art safe : oh, fly with me !”

He turned, but she is gone !

Nothing is there but the column stone. 630

Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air ?

He saw not, he knew not ; but nothing is there.

XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun

As if that morn were a jocund one.

Lightly and brightly breaks away 635

The Morning from her mantle grey,

And the Noon will look on a sultry day.

Hark to the trump, and the drum,

And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn, 639

And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,

And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,

And the clash, and the shout, ‘ they come, they come !’

The horsetails^s are plucked from the ground, and the
sword

From its sheath ; and they form, and but wait for the
word.

Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman, 645
Strike your tents, and throng to the van;
Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
That the fugitive may flee in vain,
When he breaks from the town; and none escape,
Aged or young, in the Christian shape; 650
While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.
The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the bit: 655
The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled before:
Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare, 660
So is the blade of his scimitar;
The khan and the pachas are all at their post;
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;
Leave not in Corinth a living one— 665
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.

God and the prophet—Alla Hu!

Up to the skies with that wild halloo!

“There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to
scale; 670

“And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye
fail?

“He who first downs with the red cross may crave

“His heart’s dearest wish; let him ask it, and have!”

Thus uttered Coumourgî, the dauntless vizier;

The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear, 675

And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—

Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

XXIII.

As the wolves, that headlong go

On the stately buffalo,

Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar, 680

And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,

He tramples on earth, or tosses on high

The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die:

Thus against the wall they went,

Thus the first were backward bent; 685

Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,

Strewed the earth like broken glass,

Shivered by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay, 690
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levelled plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy splash,
From the cliffs invading dash 695
Huge fragments, sapped by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn, 700
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renewed
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heaped, by the host of the infidel, 705
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,

Mingle there with the volleying thunder, 710
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes ;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice, 715
Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new :
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara ;
(We have heard the hearers say,) 720
Even unto Piræus bay.

XXV.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt :
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done. 725
Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plundered dome :
Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street ;
But here and there, where 'vantage ground 730
Against the foe may still be found,

Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again—
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall. 735

There stood an old man—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him, on that day,
In a semicircle lay; 740
Still he combated unwounded,
Though retreating, unsurrounded.

Many a scar of former fight
Lurked beneath his corslet bright;
But of every wound his body bore, 745
Each and all had been ta'en before:
Though aged he was, so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him;
And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,
Outnumbered his thin hairs of silver gray. 750

From right to left his sabre swept:

Many an Othman mother wept

Sons that were unborn, when dipped

His weapon first in Moslem gore,
Ere his years could count a score. 755
Of all he might have been the sire
Who fell that day beneath his ire :
For, sonless left long years ago,
His wrath made many a childless foe ;
And since the day, when in the strait⁹ 760
His only boy had met his fate,
His parent's iron hand did doom
More than a human hecatomb.
If shades by carnage be appeased,
Patroclus' spirit less was pleased 765
Than his, Minotti's son, who died
Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.
Buried he lay, where thousands before
For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore :
What of them is left, to tell 770
Where they lie, and how they fell ?
Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves ;
But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout ! a band
Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand : 775

Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
Swifter to smite, and never to spare—
Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on;
Thus in the fight is he ever known :
Others a gaudier garb may show, 780
To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe ;
Many a hand's on a richer hilt,
But none on a steel more ruddily gilt;
Many a loftier turban may wear,—
Alp is but known by the white arm bare ; 785
Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there !
There is not a standard on that shore
So well advanced the ranks before ;
There is not a banner in Moslem war
Will lure the Delhis half so far ; 790
It glances like a falling star !
Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
The bravest be, or late have been ;
There the craven cries for quarter
Vainly to the vengeful Tartar ; 795
Or the hero, silent lying,
Scorns to yield a groan in dying ;
Mustering his last feeble blow
'Gainst the nearest levelled foe,

Though faint beneath the mutual wound, 800
 Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,
 And Alp's career a moment checked.
 "Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
 "For thine own, thy daughter's sake." 805

"Never, renegado, never!
 "Though the life of thy gift would last for ever."

"Francesca!—Oh my promised bride!
 "Must she too perish by thy pride?"

"She is safe."—"Where? where?"—"In heaven; 810

"From whence thy traitor soul is driven—
 "Far from thee, and undefiled."

Grimly then Minotti smiled,
 As he saw Alp staggering bow
 Before his words, as with a blow. 815

"Oh God! when died she?"—"Yesternight—

"Nor weep I for her spirit's flight:

“None of my pure race shall be
“Slaves to Mahomet and thee—
“Come on!”—That challenge is in vain— 820

Alp’s already with the slain !
While Minotti’s words were wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking
Than his falchion’s point had found,
Had the time allowed to wound, 825

From within the neighbouring porch
Of a long defended church,
Where the last and desperate few
Would the failing fight renew,
The sharp shot dashed Alp to the ground ; 830

Ere an eye could view the wound
That crashed through the brain of the infidel,
Round he spun, and down he fell ;
A flash like fire within his eyes
Blazed, as he bent no more to rise, 835

And then eternal darkness sunk
Through all the palpitating trunk ;
Nought of life left, save a quivering
Where his limbs were slightly shivering :
They turned him on his back ; his breast 840

And brow were stained with gore and dust,

And through his lips the life-blood oozed,
 From its deep veins lately loosed;
 But in his pulse there was no throb,
 Nor on his lips one dying sob ; 845
 Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
 Heralded his way to death :
 Ere his very thought could pray,
 Unanealed he passed away,
 Without a hope from mercy's aid,— 850
 To the last a renegade.

XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose
 Of his followers, and his foes ;
 These in joy, in fury those :
 Then again in conflict mixing, 855
 Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
 Interchanged the blow and thrust,
 Hurling warriors in the dust.
 Street by street, and foot by foot,
 Still Minotti dares dispute 860
 The latest portion of the land
 Left beneath his high command ;

With him, aiding heart and hand,
The remnant of his gallant band.
Still the church is tenable, 865
 Whence issued late the fated ball
 That half avenged the city's fall,
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:
Thither bending sternly back,
They leave before a bloody track; 870
And, with their faces to the foe,
Dealing wounds with every blow,
The chief, and his retreating train,
Join to those within the fane:
There they yet may breathe awhile, 875
Sheltered by the massy pile.

XXIX.

Brief breathing-time! the turbaned host,
With added ranks and raging boast,
Press onwards with such strength and heat,
Their numbers balk their own retreat; 880
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not;
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
Through the massy column to turn and fly;
They perforce must do or die. 885

They die ; but ere their eyes could close
Avengers o'er their bodies rose ;
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinned, though slaughtered still ;
And faint the weary Christians wax 890
Before the still renewed attacks :
And now the Othmans gain the gate ;
Still resists its iron weight,
And still, all deadly aimed and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot ; 895
From every shattered window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower :
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—it falls—and all is o'er ; 900
Lost Corinth may resist no more !

XXX.

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone :
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above, 905
With eyes of light and looks of love ;

And placed upon that holy shrine
 To fix our thoughts on things divine,
 When pictured there, we kneeling see
 Her, and the boy-God on her knee, 910
 Smiling sweetly on each prayer
 To heaven, as if to waft it there.
 Still she smiled; even now she smiles,
 Though slaughter streams along her aisles:
 Minotti lifted his aged eye, 915
 And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
 Then seized a torch which blazed thereby;
 And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
 Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone 920
 Contained the dead of ages gone;
 Their names were on the graven floor,
 But now illegible with gore;
 The carved crests, and curious hues
 The varied marble's veins diffuse, 925
 Were smeared, and slippery—stained, and strown
 With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown:

There were dead above, and the dead below
 Lay cold in many a confined row;
 You might see them piled in sable state, 930
 By a pale light through a gloomy grate;
 But War had entered their dark caves,
 And stored along the vaulted graves
 Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
 In masses by the fleshless dead: 935
 Here, throughout the siege, had been
 The Christians' chiefest magazine;
 To these a late formed train now led,
 Minotti's last and stern resource
 Against the foe's o'erwhelming force. 940

XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain
 To strive, and those must strive in vain:
 For lack of further lives, to slake
 The thirst of vengeance now awake,
 With barbarous blows they gash the dead, 945
 And lop the already lifeless head,
 And fell the statues from their niche,
 And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,

And from each other's rude hands wrest
 The silver vessels saints had blessed. 950
 To the high altar on they go ;
 Oh, but it made a glorious show !
 On its table still behold
 The cup of consecrated gold ;
 Massy and deep, a glittering prize, 955
 Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes :
 That morn it held the holy wine,
 Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
 Which his worshippers drank at the break of day,
 To shrive their souls ere they joined in the fray. 960
 Still a few drops within it lay ;
 And round the sacred table glow
 Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
 From the purest metal cast ;
 A spoil—the richest, and the last: 965

XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretched
 To grasp the spoil he almost reached,
 When old Minotti's hand
 Touched with the torch the train—
 'Tis fired ! 970

Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turbaned victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurled on high with the shivered fane,
In one wild roar expired! 975
The shattered town—the walls thrown down—
The waves a moment backward bent—
The hills that shake, although unrent,
As if an earthquake passed—
The thousand shapeless things all driven 980
In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,
By that tremendous blast—
Proclaimed the desperate conflict o'er
On that too long afflicted shore :
Up to the sky like rockets go 985
All that mingled there below :
Many a tall and goodly man,
Scorched and shrivelled to a span,
When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strewed the plain : 990
Down the ashes shower like rain ;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles ;

Some fell on the shore, but, far away,
Scattered o'er the isthmus lay ; 995

Christian or Moslem, which be they?
Let their mothers see and say!
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled
On the sweet sleep of her child, 1000

Little deemed she such a day
Would rend those tender limbs away.

Not the matrons that them bore
Could discern their offspring more ;
That one moment left no trace 1005

More of human form or face

Save a scattered scalp or bone :

And down came blazing rafters, strown

Around, and many a falling stone,

Deeply dented in the clay, 1010

All blackened there and reeking lay.

All the living things that heard

That deadly earth shock disappeared :

The wild birds flew ; the wild dogs fled,

And howling left the unburied dead ; 1015

The camels from their keepers broke ;

The distant steer forsook the yoke—

The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
And burst his girth, and tore his rein;
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh, 1020
Deep-mouthed arose, and doubly harsh;
The wolves yelled on the caverned hill,
Where echo rolled in thunder still;
The jackal's troop, in gathered cry,¹⁰
Bayed from afar complainingly, 1025
With a mixed and mournful sound,
Like crying babe, and beaten hound:
With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
The eagle left his rocky nest,
And mounted nearer to the sun, 1030
The clouds beneath him seemed so dun;
Their smoke assailed his startled beak,
And made him higher soar and shriek—

Thus was Corinth lost and won!

NOTES.

Note 1, page 9, line 3.

The Turcoman hath left his herd.

The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal: they dwell in tents.

Note 2, page 11, line 17.

Coumourgi—he whose closing scene.

Ali Coumourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III. after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin, (in the plain of Carlowitz) in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Breuner, and some other German prisoners; and his last words, "Oh that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs!" a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, "was a great general," he said, "I shall become a greater, and at his expense."

Note 3, page 24, line 15.

There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea.

The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

Note 4, page 26, line 5.

And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull.

This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.

Note 5, page 26, line 14.

And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair.

This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into Paradise by it.

Note 6, page 29, line 3.

I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called "Christabel." It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.

Note 7, page 34, line 18.

There is a light cloud by the moon—

I have been told that the idea expressed from lines 597 to

603 has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in pages 182-3-4 of the English version of “Vathek” (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification.

Note 8, page 36, line 18.

The horsetails are plucked from the ground, and the sword.

The horsetail, fixed upon a lance, a Pasha's standard.

Note 9, page 42, line 7.

And since the day, when in the strait.

In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and the Turks.

Note 10, page 54, line 7.

The jackal's troop, in gathered cry.

I believe I have taken a poetical license to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.

608 has been admitted by those whose opinion is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not in the sense in which I have used the word. I have before me a page of the French work to which I have before referred, and I have seen it, and read it, without a renewal of the impression. I have seen it, and read it, without a renewal of the impression. I have seen it, and read it, without a renewal of the impression.

The portrait is placed on the ground, and the moral. The portrait, placed upon a base, is a Pasha's standard.

Note 9, page 43, line 7. And thus the dog, which is the dog.

In the naval battle at the mouth of the Danube, between the Venetians and the Turks.

Note 10, page 44, line 7. The dog's head is placed on the dog's head.

I believe I have taken a great deal of trouble to translate the text from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They have ruins and follow ruins.

and much more (agitated). As an antiseptic (disinfectant) it is used on the very surface of the dog's head. It is a hope to be disappointed with it, and I think so. It is a hope to be disappointed with it, and I think so. It is a hope to be disappointed with it, and I think so.

Note 7, page 44, line 18. There is a light which is a light.

at 700 feet high, and it is a light which is a light.

SCROPE BEARDMORE DAVIES, Esq.

PARISINA.

IS INSCRIBED

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRER HIS TALENTS

AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

Jan. 27, 1916.

PARISIN.

TO

SCROPE BEARDMORE DAVIES, Esq.

THE FOLLOWING POEM

IS INSCRIBED

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRER HIS TALENTS

AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

Jan. 22, 1816.

The following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's "Antiquities of the House of Brunswick."—I am aware, that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for Nicholas, as more metrical.

"Under the reign of Nicholas III. Ferrara was polluted
"with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an
"attendant, and his own observation, the Marquis of
"Este discovered the incestuous loves of his wife Pa-
"risina, and Hugo his bastard son, a beautiful and
"valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by
"the sentence of a father and husband, who published
"his shame, and survived their execution. He was
"unfortunate, if they were guilty; if they were inno-
"cent, he was still more unfortunate: nor is there any
"possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the
"last act of the justice of a parent."—*Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works*, vol. 3d. p. 470, new edition.

PARISINA.

I.

It is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard ;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whisper'd word ;
And gentle winds, and waters near, 5
Make music to the lonely ear.
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue, 10
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

II.

But it is not to list to the waterfall 15

That Parisina leaves her hall,

And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light

That the lady walks in the shadow of night;

And if she sits in Este's bower,

'Tis not for the sake of its full-blown flower— 20

She listens—but not for the nightingale—

Though her ear expects as soft a tale.

There glides a step through the foliage thick,

And her cheek grows pale—and her heart beats quick.

There whispers a voice through the rustling leaves,

And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves: 26

A moment more—and they shall meet—

'Tis past—her lover's at her feet.

III.

And what unto them is the world beside

With all its change of time and tide? 30

Its living things—its earth and sky—

Are nothing to their mind and eye.

And heedless as the dead are they

Of aught around, above, beneath;

As if all else had passed away, 35
They only for each other breathe;
Their very sighs are full of joy
So deep, that did it not decay,
That happy madness would destroy
The hearts which feel its fiery sway: 40
Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
In that tumultuous tender dream?
Who that have felt that passion's power,
Or paused, or feared in such an hour?
Or thought how brief such moments last: 45
But yet—they are already past!
Alas! we must awake before
We know such vision comes no more.

IV.

With many a lingering look they leave
The spot of guilty gladness past; 50
And though they hope, and vow, they grieve,
As if that parting were the last.
The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
The lip that there would cling for ever,
While gleams on Parisina's face 55
The Heaven she fears will not forgive her,

As if each calmly conscious star
Beheld her frailty from afar—
The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
Yet binds them to their trysting-place. 60
But it must come, and they must part
In fearful heaviness of heart,
With all the deep and shuddering chill
Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V.

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed, 65
To covet there another's bride;
But she must lay her conscious head
A husband's trusting heart beside.
But fevered in her sleep she seems,
And red her cheek with troubled dreams, 70
And mutters she in her unrest
A name she dare not breathe by day,
And clasps her Lord unto the breast
Which pants for one away:
And he to that embrace awakes, 75
And, happy in the thought, mistakes
That dreaming sigh, and warm caress,
For such as he was wont to bless;

And could in very fondness weep
O'er her who loves him even in sleep. 80

VI.

He clasped her sleeping to his heart,
And listened to each broken word :
He hears—Why doth Prince Azo start,
As if the Archangel's voice he heard?
And well he may—a deeper doom 85
Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
When he shall wake to sleep no more,
And stand the eternal throne before.
And well he may—his earthly peace
Upon that sound is doomed to cease. 90
That sleeping whisper of a name
Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.
And whose that name? that o'er his pillow
Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
Which rolls the plank upon the shore, 95
And dashes on the pointed rock
The wretch who sinks to rise no more,—
So came upon his soul the shock.
And whose that name? 'tis Hugo's,—his—
In sooth he had not deemed of this!— 100

'Tis Hugo's,—he, the child of one
 He loved—his own all-evil son—
 The offspring of his wayward youth,
 When he betrayed Bianca's truth,
 The maid whose folly could confide 105
 In him who made her not his bride.

VII.

He plucked his poignard in its sheath,
 But sheathed it ere the point was bare—
 Howe'er unworthy now to breathe,
 He could not slay a thing so fair— 110
 At least, not smiling—sleeping—there—
 Nay, more:—he did not wake her then,
 But gazed upon her with a glance
 Which, had she roused her from her trance,
 Had frozen her sense to sleep again— 115
 And o'er his brow the burning lamp
 Gleamed on the dew-drops big and damp.
 She spake no more—but still she slumbered—
 While, in his thought, her days are numbered.

VIII.

And with the morn he sought, and found, 120

In many a tale from those around,

The proof of all he feared to know,

Their present guilt, his future woe ;

The long-conniving damsels seek

To save themselves, and would transfer 125

The guilt—the shame—the doom—to her :

Concealment is no more—they speak

All circumstance which may compel

Full credence to the tale they tell :

And Azo's tortured heart and ear 130

Have nothing more to feel or hear.

IX.

He was not one who brooked delay :

Within the chamber of his state,

The chief of Este's ancient sway

Upon his throne of judgment sate ; 135

His nobles and his guards are there,—

Before him is the sinful pair ;

Both young,—and *one* how passing fair!

With swordless belt, and fettered hand,
Oh, Christ ! that thus a son should stand 140
Before a father's face !
Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,
And hear the sentence of his ire,
The tale of his disgrace !
And yet he seems not overcome, 145
Although, as yet, his voice be dumb.

X.

And still, and pale, and silently
Did Parisina wait her doom ;
How changed since last her speaking eye
Glanced gladness round the glittering room, 150
Where high-born men were proud to wait—
Where Beauty watched to imitate
Her gentle voice—her lovely mien—
And gather from her air and gait
The graces of it's queen : 155
Then,—had her eye in sorrow wept,
A thousand warriors forth had leapt,
A thousand swords had sheathless shone,
And made her quarrel all their own.

Now,—what is she? and what are they? 160

Can she command, or these obey?

All silent and unheeding now,

With downcast eyes and knitting brow,

And folded arms, and freezing air,

And lips that scarce their scorn forbear, 165

Her knights and dames, her court—is there:

And he, the chosen one, whose lance

Had yet been couched before her glance,

Who—were his arm a moment free—

Had died or gained her liberty; 170

The minion of his father's bride,—

He, too, is fettered by her side;

Nor sees her swoln and full eye swim

Less for her own despair than him:

Those lids o'er which the violet vein— 175

Wandering, leaves a tender stain,

Shining through the smoothest white

That e'er did softest kiss invite—

Now seemed with hot and livid glow

To press, not shade, the orbs below; 180

Which glance so heavily, and fill,

As tear on tear grows gathering still.

XI.

And he for her had also wept,
 But for the eyes that on him gazed :
 His sorrow, if he felt it, slept ; 185
 Stern and erect his brow was raised.
 Whate'er the grief his soul avowed,
 He would not shrink before the crowd ;
 But yet he dared not look on her :
 Remembrance of the hours that were— 190
 His guilt—his love—his present state—
 His father's wrath—all good men's hate—
 His earthly, his eternal fate—
 And hers,—oh, hers !—he dared not throw
 One look upon that deathlike brow ! 195
 Else had his rising heart betrayed
 Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII.

And Azo spake :—" But yesterday
 " I gloried in a wife and son ;
 " That dream this morning passed away ; 200
 " Ere day declines, I shall have none.

“ My life must linger on alone ;

“ Well,—let that pass,—there breathes not one

“ Who would not do as I have done :

“ Those ties are broken—not by me ; 205

“ Let that too pass ;—the doom’s prepared !

“ Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,

“ And then—thy crime’s reward !

“ Away ! address thy prayers to Heaven,

“ Before its evening stars are met— 210

“ Learn if thou there canst be forgiven ;

“ It’s mercy may absolve thee yet.

“ But here, upon the earth beneath,

“ There is no spot where thou and I

“ Together, for an hour, could breathe : 215

“ Farewell ! I will not see thee die—

“ But thou, frail thing ! shalt view his head—

“ Away ! I cannot speak the rest :

“ Go ! woman of the wanton breast ;

“ Not I, but thou his blood dost shed : 220

“ Go ! if that sight thou canst outlive,

“ And joy thee in the life I give.”

XIII.

And here stern Azo hid his face—

For on his brow the swelling vein

Throbbed as if back upon his brain 225

The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again ;

And therefore bowed he for a space,

And pass'd his shaking hand along

His eye, to veil it from the throng ;

While Hugo rais'd his chain'd hands, 230

And for a brief delay demands

His father's ear : the silent sire

Forbids not what his words require.

“ It is not that I dread the death—

“ For thou hast seen me by thy side 235

“ All redly through the battle ride,

“ And that not once a useless brand

“ Thy slaves have wrested from my hand,

“ Hath shed more blood in cause of thine,

“ Than e'er can stain the axe of mine : 240

“ Thou gav'st, and may'st resume my breath,

“ A gift for which I thank thee not ;

“ Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,

- “ Her slighted love and ruined name,
“ Her offspring’s heritage of shame; 245
“ But she is in the grave, where he,
“ Her son, thy rival, soon shall be.
“ Her broken heart—my severed head—
“ Shall witness for thee from the dead
“ How trusty and how tender were 250
“ Thy youthful love—paternal care.
“ ’Tis true, that I have done thee wrong—
“ But wrong for wrong—this deemed thy bride,
“ The other victim of thy pride,
“ Thou know’st for me was destined long. 255
“ Thou saw’st, and coveted’st her charms—
“ And with thy very crime—my birth,
“ Thou taunted’st me—as little worth;
“ A match ignoble for her arms,
“ Because, forsooth, I could not claim 260
“ The lawful heirship of thy name,
“ Nor sit on Este’s lineal throne:
“ Yet, were a few short summers mine,
“ My name should more than Este’s shine
“ With honours all my own. 265
“ I had a sword—and have a breast
“ That should have won as haught’ a crest

“ As ever waved along the line
“ Of all these sovereign sires of thine.
“ Not always knightly spurs are worn 270
“ The brightest by the better born;
“ And mine have lanced my courser’s flank
“ Before proud chiefs of princely rank,
“ When charging to the cheering cry
“ Of ‘ Este and of Victory!’” 275

“ I will not plead the cause of crime,
“ Nor sue thee to redeem from time
“ A few brief hours or days that must
“ At length roll o’er my reckless dust;—
“ Such maddening moments as my past, 280
“ They could not, and they did not, last—
“ Albeit, my birth and name be base,
“ And thy nobility of race
“ Disdained to deck a thing like me—
“ Yet in my lineaments they trace 285
“ Some features of my father’s face,
“ And in my spirit—all of thee.
“ From thee—this tamelessness of heart—
“ From thee—nay, wherefore dost thou start?—

“ From thee in all their vigour came 290

“ My arm of strength, my soul of flame—

“ Thou didst not give me life alone,

“ But all that made me more thine own.

“ See what thy guilty love hath done!

“ Repaid thee with too like a son! 295

“ I am no bastard in my soul,

“ For that, like thine, abhorred controul:

“ And for my breath, that hasty boon

“ Thou gav’st and wilt resume so soon,

“ I valued it no more than thou, 300

“ When rose thy casque above thy brow,

“ And we, all side by side, have striven,

“ And o’er the dead our coursers driven:

“ The past is nothing—and at last

“ The future can but be the past; 305

“ Yet would I that I then had died:

“ For though thou work’dst my mother’s ill,

“ And made thy own my destined bride,

“ I feel thou art my father still;

“ And, harsh as sounds thy hard decree, 310

“ ’Tis not unjust, although from thee.

“ Begot in sin, to die in shame,

“ My life begun and ends the same:

“ As erred the sire, so erred the son—
“ And thou must punish both in one. 315
“ My crime seems worst to human view,
“ But God must judge between us too!”

XIV.

He ceased—and stood with folded arms,
On which the circling fetters sounded ;
And not an ear but felt as wounded, 320
Of all the chiefs that there were ranked,
When those dull chains in meeting clanked :
Till Parisina’s fatal charms
Again attracted every eye—
Would she thus hear him doomed to die! 325
She stood, I said, all pale and still,
The living cause of Hugo’s ill :
Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turned to either side—
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close, 330
Or shade the glance o’er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew—
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood ; 335

But every now and then a tear
So large and slowly gathered slid
From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear!
And those who saw, it did surprise, 340
Such drops could fall from human eyes.
To speak she thought—the imperfect note
Was choked within her swelling throat,
Yet seemed in that low hollow groan
Her whole heart gushing in the tone. 345
It ceased—again she thought to speak,
Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
And to the earth she fell like stone
Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
More like a thing that ne'er had life,— 350
A monument of Azo's wife,—
Than her, that living guilty thing,
Whose every passion was a sting,
Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
That guilt's detection and despair. 355
But yet she lived—and all too soon
Recovered from that death-like swoon—
But scarce to reason—every sense
Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense;

And each frail fibre of her brain 36
(As bow-strings, when relaxed by rain,
The erring arrow launch aside)
Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide—
The past a blank, the future black,
With glimpses of a dreary track, 365
Like lightning on the desert path,
When midnight storms are mustering wrath.
She feared—she felt that something ill
Lay on her soul, so deep and chill—
That there was sin and shame she knew ; 370
That some one was to die—but who?
She had forgotten :—did she breathe?
Could this be still the earth beneath?
The sky above, and men around ;
Or were they fiends who now so frowned 375
On one, before whose eyes each eye
Till then had smiled in sympathy?
All was confused and undefined,
To her all-jarred and wandering mind ;
A chaos of wild hopes and fears : 380
And now in laughter, now in tears,
But madly still in each extreme,
She strove with that convulsive dream ;

For so it seemed on her to break :

Oh ! vainly must she strive to wake ! 385

XV.

The Convent bells are ringing,

But mournfully and slow ;

In the grey square turret swinging,

With a deep sound, to and fro.

Heavily to the heart they go ! 390

Hark ! the hymn is singing—

The song for the dead below,

Or the living who shortly shall be so !

For a departing being's soul

The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll :

He is near his mortal goal ; 396

Kneeling at the Friar's knee ;

Sad to hear—and piteous to see—

Kneeling on the bare cold ground,

With the block before and the guards around— 400

And the headsman with his bare arm ready,

That the blow may be both swift and steady,

Feels if the axe be sharp and true—

Since he set its edge anew :

While the crowd in a speechless circle gather 405

To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father.

XVI.

It is a lovely hour as yet
 Before the summer sun shall set,
 Which rose upon that heavy day,
 And mocked it with his steadiest ray; 410
 And his evening beams are shed
 Full on Hugo's fated head,
 As his last confession pouring
 To the monk, his doom deploring
 In penitential holiness, 415
 He bends to hear his accents bless
 With absolution such as may
 Wipe our mortal stains away.
 That high sun on his head did glisten
 As he there did bow and listen— 420
 And the rings of chesnut hair
 Curled half down his neck so bare;
 But brighter still the beam was thrown
 Upon the axe which near him shone
 With a clear and ghastly glitter—
 Oh! that parting hour was bitter! 425
 Even the stern stood chilled with awe:
 Dark the crime, and just the law—
 Yet they shuddered as they saw.

XVII.

The parting prayers are said and over
Of that false son—and daring lover ! 430

His beads and sins are all recounted,
His hours to their last minute mounted—
His mantling cloak before was stripped,
His bright brown locks must now be clipped,
'Tis done—all closely are they shorn— 435

The vest which till this moment worn—
The scarf which Parisina gave—
Must not adorn him to the grave.
Even that must now be thrown aside,
And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied ; 440

But no—that last indignity
Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
All feelings seemingly subdued,
In deep disdain were half renewed,
When headman's hands prepared to bind 445

Those eyes which would not brook such blind :
As if they dared not look on death.

“ No—yours my forfeit blood and breath—
“ These hands are chained—but let me die
“ At least with an unshackled eye— 450

“Strike:”—and as the word he said,

Upon the block he bowed his head;

These the last accents Hugo spoke:

“Strike”—and flashing fell the stroke—

Rolled the head—and, gushing, sunk 455

Back the stained and heaving trunk,

In the dust, which each deep vein

Slaked with its ensanguined rain;

His eyes and lips a moment quiver,

Convulsed and quick—then fix for ever. 460

He died, as erring man should die,

Without display, without parade;

Meekly had he bowed and prayed,

As not disdaining priestly aid,

Nor desperate of all hope on high. 465

And while before the Prior kneeling,

His heart was weaned from earthly feeling;

His wrathful sire—his paramour—

What were they in such an hour?

No more reproach—no more despair; 470

No thought but heaven—no word but prayer—

Save the few which from him broke,

When, bared to meet the headman's stroke,

He claimed to die with eyes unbound,
His sole adieu to those around. 475

XVIII.

Still as the lips that closed in death,
Each gazer's bosom held his breath :
But yet, afar, from man to man,
A cold electric shiver ran,
As down the deadly blow descended 480
On him whose life and love thus ended ;
And with a hushing sound comprest,
A sigh shrunk back on every breast ;
But no more thrilling noise rose there,
Beyond the blow that to the block 485
Pierced through with forced and sullen shock,
Save one :—what cleaves the silent air
So madly shrill—so passing wild ?
That, as a mother's o'er her child,
Done to death by sudden blow, 490
To the sky these accents go,
Like a soul's in endless woe.
Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
That horrid voice ascends to heaven,

And every eye is turned thereon; 495
 But sound and sight alike are gone!
 It was a woman's shriek—and ne'er
 In madlier accents rose despair;
 And those who heard it, as it past,
 In mercy wished it were the last. 500

XIX.

Hugo is fallen; and, from that hour,
 No more in palace, hall, or bower,
 Was Parisina heard or seen:
 Her name—as if she ne'er had been—
 Was banished from each lip and ear, 505
 Like words of wantonness or fear;
 And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
 Was mention heard of wife or son;
 No tomb—no memory had they;
 Theirs was unconsecrated clay; 510
 At least the knight's who died that day.
 But Parisina's fate lies hid
 Like dust beneath the coffin lid:
 Whether in convent she abode,
 And won to heaven her dreary road, 515

By blighted and remorseful years
Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears;
Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
For that dark love she dared to feel;
Or if, upon the moment smote, 520
She died by tortures less remote;
Like him she saw upon the block,
With heart that shared the headman's shock,
In quickened brokenness that came,
In pity, o'er her shattered frame, 525
None knew—and none can ever know.
But whatsoe'er its end below,
Her life began and closed in woe!

XX.

And Azo found another bride,
And goodly sons grew by his side; 530
But none so lovely and so brave
As him who withered in the grave;
Or if they were—on his cold eye
Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
Or noticed with a smothered sigh. 535
But never tear his cheek descended,
And never smile his brow unbended;

And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
The intersected lines of thought;
Those furrows which the burning share 540
Of Sorrow ploughs untimely there;
Scars of the lacerating mind
Which the Soul's war doth leave behind.
He was past all mirth or woe:
Nothing more remained below, 545
But sleepless nights and heavy days,
A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
A heart which shunned itself—and yet
That would not yield—nor could forget,
Which when it least appeared to melt, 550
Intently thought—intensely felt:
The deepest ice which ever froze
Can only o'er the surface close—
The living stream lies quick below,
And flows—and cannot cease to flow. 555
Still was his sealed-up bosom haunted
By thoughts which Nature hath implanted;
Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
Howe'er our stifled tears we banish;
When, struggling as they rise to start, 560
We check those waters of the heart,

They are not dried—those tears unshed
But flow back to the fountain head,
And resting in their spring more pure,
For ever in its depth endure, 565
Unseen, unwept, but uncongealed,
And cherished most where least revealed.
With inward starts of feeling left,
To throb o'er those of life bereft;
Without the power to fill again 570
The desert gap which made his pain;
Without the hope to meet them where
United souls shall gladness share,
With all the consciousness that he
Had only passed a just decree; 575
That they had wrought their doom of ill,
Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
The tainted branches of the tree,
If lopped with care, a strength may give,
By which the rest shall bloom and live 580
All greenly fresh and wildly free.
But if the lightning, in its wrath,
The waving boughs with fury scathe,
The massy trunk the ruin feels,
And never more a leaf reveals. 585

They are not dried—those tears dashed
 But flow back to the fountain head
 And resting in their spring more pure
 For ever in its depth endure
 Unseen, unwept, but unmingled,
 And cherished most where least revealed
 With inward stars of feeling
 To those o'er those of life's battle
 Without the power to fill again
 The desert gap which made his pain
 Without the hope to meet them
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 Had only passed a just decree
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NOTES.

Note 1, page 63, line 14.

As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

The lines contained in Section I. were printed as set to music some time since: but belonged to the poem where they now appear, the greater part of which was composed prior to “Lara” and other compositions since published.

Note 2, page 75, last line.

That should have won as haught a crest.

Haught—haughty—“Away *haught* man, thou art insulting me.”

Shakspeare, Richard II.

THE END.

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1810

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**T. DAVISON, Lombard-street,
Whitefriars, London.**

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Shakespeare, Richard II.
Haughty—haughty—"Away haughty man, thou art insulting
That should have won us haught a crest.
Note 2, page 75, last line.

THE END.

THE
Prisoner of Chillon,

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AND

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1816.

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AND

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J. DAVENPORT, PRINTER.

BY LORD BYRON.

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The prison, and the damp vault's dreary gloom,
These country conquerors with their martyrdom,
And Prudent's love finds wings on every wind.

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Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod.
By Bonivard!—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL spirit of the chainless mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard!¹—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

THE
PRISONER OF CHILLON.

A FABLE.

I.

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night,²
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bowed, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare; 10
But this was for my father's faith
I suffered chains and courted death;

That father perish'd at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage; 20
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have seal'd;
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of gothic mold,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns, massy and grey,
Dim with a dull imprisoned ray, 30
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;

Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain ;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away, 40
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score,
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone,
We could not move a single pace, 50
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight ;

And thus together—yet apart,
 Fettered in hand, but pined in heart;
 'Twas still some solace in the dearth
 Of the pure elements of earth,
 To hearken to each other's speech,
 And each turn comforter to each,
 With some new hope, or legend old, 60
 Or song heroically bold;
 But even these at length grew cold.
 Our voices took a dreary tone,
 An echo of the dungeon-stone,
 A grating sound—not full and free
 As they of yore were wont to be:
 It might be fancy—but to me
 They never sounded like our own.

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
 And to uphold and cheer the rest 70
 I ought to do—and did my best—
 And each did well in his degree.

The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him—with eyes as blue as heaven,
For him my soul was sorely moved ;
And truly might it be distress
To see such bird in such a nest ;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me 80
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun :
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flowed like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe 90
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V.

The other was as pure of mind,
But formed to combat with his kind ;

Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank

With joy:—but not in chains to pine:
His spirit withered with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—

And so perchance in sooth did mine; 100

But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.

He was a hunter of the hills,
Had followed there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fettered feet the worst of ills.

VI.

Lake Lemman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent 110
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,³

Which round about the wave enthralls:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave.

Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day ;
 Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd ;
And I have felt the winter's spray 119
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky ;
 And then the very rock hath rock'd,
 And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loath'd and put away his food ;
It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare, 130
And for the like had little care :
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat,
Our bread was such as captive's tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,

Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den :
But what were these to us or him ?
These wasted not his heart or limb ;
My brother's soul was of that mould 140
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side ;
But why delay the truth ?—he died.
I saw, and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlocked his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave 150
Even from the cold earth of our cave.
I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.

I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above 160
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII.

But he, the favorite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyred father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be 170
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was withered on the stalk away.
Oh God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing

In any shape, in any mood :—
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean 180
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of Sin delirious with its dread :
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow :
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind ;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom 190
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray—
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,

For I was sunk in silence—lost 200
In this last loss, of all the most ;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less :
I listened, but I could not hear—
I called, for I was wild with fear ;
I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished ;
I called, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound, 210
And rush'd to him :—I found him not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived—*I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon-dew ;
The last—the sole—the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe : 220
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas ! my own was full as chill ;

I had not strength to stir, or strive,
 But felt that I was still alive—
 A frantic feeling, when we know
 That what we love shall ne'er be so.
 : I know not why
 I could not die,
 I had no earthly hope—but faith,
 And that forbade a selfish death. 230

IX.

What next befell me then and there
 I know not well—I never knew—
 First came the loss of light, and air,
 And then of darkness too:
 I had no thought, no feeling—none—
 Among the stones I stood a stone,
 And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
 As shrubless crags within the mist;
 For all was blank, and bleak, and grey,
 It was not night—it was not day, 240
 It was not even the dungeon-light,
 So hateful to my heavy sight,

But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime—
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless! 250

X.

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track, 260
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,

I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,

And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird, with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,

And seem'd to say them all for me! 270

I never saw its like before,

I ne'er shall see its likeness more:

It seem'd like me to want a mate,

But was not half so desolate,

And it was come to love me when

None lived to love me so again,

And cheering from my dungeon's brink,

Had brought me back to feel and think.

I know not if it late were free,

Or broke its cage to perch on mine, 280

But knowing well captivity,

Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!

Or if it were, in winged guise,

A visitant from Paradise;

For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while
 Which made me both to weep and smile;
 I sometimes deemed that it might be
 My brother's soul come down to me;
 But then at last away it flew,
 And then 'twas mortal—well I knew, 290
 For he would never thus have flown,
 And left me twice so doubly lone,—
 Lone—as the corse within its shroud,
 Lone—as a solitary cloud,

A single cloud on a sunny day,
 While all the rest of heaven is clear,
 A frown upon the atmosphere,
 That hath no business to appear

When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI.

A kind of change came in my fate, 300
 My keepers grew compassionate,
 I know not what had made them so,
 They were inured to sights of woe,
 But so it was:—my broken chain
 With links unfasten'd did remain,

And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part ;
And round the pillars one by one, 310
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod ;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XII.

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all, 320
Who loved me in a human shape ;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me :
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery ;

I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more, upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

330

XIII.

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow;
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,⁴
Which in my very face did smile,

340

The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,

But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue. 350

The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seemed joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seemed to fly,
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode 360
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new-dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,
And yet my glance, too much opprest,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days,

I kept no count—I took no note,

I had no hope my eyes to raise,

And clear them of their dreary mote ;

At last men came to set me free, 370

I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where,

It was at length the same to me,

Fettered or fetterless to be,

I learn'd to love despair.

And thus when they appear'd at last,

And all my bonds aside were cast,

These heavy walls to me had grown

A hermitage—and all my own !

And half I felt as they were come

To tear me from a second home: 380

With spiders I had friendship made,

And watch'd them in their sullen trade,

Had seen the mice by moonlight play,

And why should I feel less than they ?

We were all inmates of one place,

And I, the monarch of each race,

Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell !
 In quiet we had learn'd to dwell—
 My very chains and I grew friends,
 So much a long communion tends 390
 To make us what we are:—even I
 Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

SONNET.

ROUSSEAU—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and de Staël—

⁵ Lemman ! these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these, wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recall :
To them thy banks were lovely as to all,
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wondrous ; but by *thee*
How much more, Lake of Beauty ! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real !

STANZAS TO —.

I.

THOUGH the day of my destiny's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

II.

Then when nature around me is smiling
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling
Because it reminds me of thine;

And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

III.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not condemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'Tis of *thee* that I think—not of them.

IV.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never could'st shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,

Though watchful, 'twas not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

V.

Yet I blame not the world, nor despise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it
'Twas folly not sooner to shun :
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

VI.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recall,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all :
In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

DARKNESS.

I HAD a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air ;
Morn came, and went—and came, and brought no day,
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation ; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light :
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons ; cities were consumed,

And men were gathered round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face ;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos, and their mountain-torch :
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd ;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them ; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept ; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled ;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and looked up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world ; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd : the wild birds
 shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings ; the wildest brutes

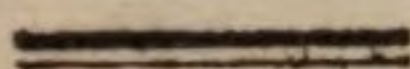
Came tame and tremulous ; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food :
And War, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again ;—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart
Gorging himself in gloom : no love was left ;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious ; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh ;
The meagre by the meagre were devoured,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse, and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws ; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answered not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees ; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,

And they were enemies ; they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage ; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery ; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd, and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written Fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths ;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal ; as they dropp'd
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead ; the tides were in their grave,

The moon their mistress had expired before ;
The winds were withered in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd ; Darkness had no need
Of aid from them—She was the universe.

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE,

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.



I stood beside the grave of him who blazed
The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it ; and I ask'd
The Gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
Through the thick deaths of half a century ;
And thus he answered—" Well, I do not know
" Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so ;

“ He died before my day of Sextonship,
“ And I had not the digging of this grave.”
And is this all? I thought,—and do we rip
The veil of Immortality? and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages, to endure this blight?
So soon and so successful? As I said,
The Architect of all on which we tread,
For Earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton’s thought
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers;—as he caught
As ’twere the twilight of a former Sun,
Thus spoke he,—“ I believe the man of whom
“ You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
“ Was a most famous writer in his day,
“ And therefore travellers step from out their way
“ To pay him honour,—and myself whate’er
“ Your honour pleases,”—then most pleased I shook
From out my pocket’s avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as ’twere
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare

So much but inconveniently ;—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones ! all the while,
Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I—for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,
On that Old Sexton's natural homily,
In which there was Obscurity and Fame,
The Glory and the Nothing of a Name.

THE DREAM.

I.

Our life is twofold ; Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence : Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their developement have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy ;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being ; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time, 10
And look like heralds of eternity ;
They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
Like sybils of the future ; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain ;

They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind?—The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own 20
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such, 30
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and cornfields, and the abodes of men
Scattered at intervals, and wreathing smoke

Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath 40
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young—yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away; 50
He had no breath, no being, but in her's;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye followed her's, and saw with her's,
Which coloured all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,

The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of her's, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart 60
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 'twas much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestowed on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honoured race.—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved 70
Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.

There was an ancient mansion, and before

Its walls there was a steed caparisoned :
Within an antique Oratory stood
The Boy of whom I spake ;—he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro ; anon 80
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of ; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 'twere
With a convulsion—then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet ; as he paused,
The Lady of his love re-entered there,
She was serene and smiling then, and yet 90
She knew she was by him beloved,—she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand ; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came ;

He dropped the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu, 100
For they did part with mutual smiles ; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way ;
And ne'er repassed that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams ; he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not
Himself like what he had been ; on the sea 110
And on the shore he was a wanderer ;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all ; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noon-tide sultriness,
Couched among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them ; by his sleeping side

Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man 120
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better;—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy, 130
Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her, was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,

He dropped the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu, 100
For they did part with mutual smiles ; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old Hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way ;
And ne'er repassed that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his Soul drank their sunbeams ; he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects ; he was not
Himself like what he had been ; on the sea 110
And on the shore he was a wanderer ;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all ; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noon-tide sultriness,
Couched among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them ; by his sleeping side

Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man 120
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in Heaven.

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The Lady of his love was wed with One
Who did not love her better;—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing Infancy, 130
Daughters and sons of Beauty,—but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.
What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her, was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,

Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved, 141
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.—
The Wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand
Before an Altar—with a gentle bride ;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The Starlight of his Boyhood ;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock 150
That in the antique Oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude ; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him ; he could see

Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall, 160
And the remembered chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The lady of his love;—Oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wandered from its dwelling, and her eyes 170
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to her's.
And this the world calls phrenzy; but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance

Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth? 180
Which strips the distance of its phantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real!

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.—
The Wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With Hatred and Contention; Pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until 190
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days,⁶
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick Spirit of the Universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;

To him the book of Night was opened wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd 200
A marvel and a secret—Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past; it had no further change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery.

THE INCANTATION.

(The following Poem was a Chorus in an unfinished Witch Drama,
which was begun some years ago.)

I.

WHEN the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answered owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

II.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep,
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gathered in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

III.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

IV.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptized thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

V.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatched the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

VI.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy ;
By the perfection of thine art
Which pass'd for human thine own heart ;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee ! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper Hell !

VII.

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial ;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny ;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear ;
Lo ! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee ;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither !

PROMETHEUS.

I.

TITAN ! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise ;
What was thy pity's recompense ?
A silent suffering, and intense ;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

II.

Titan ! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill ;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die :
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack ;
The fate thou didst so well foresee
But would not to appease him tell ;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his Soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

III.

Thy Godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To Mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, Man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—an equal to all woes,

And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentered recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory.

And a firm will, and a deep sense,

Which even in tortures can defy

Its own consented recompense,

Triumphs where it dares defy

And making Death a Victory.

NOTES

TO THE

PRISONER OF CHILLON, &c.

Note 1, page 2, line 5.

By Bonnivard!—may none those marks efface.

François de Bonnivard, fils de Louis de Bonnivard, originaire de Seyssel & Seigneur de Lunes, naquit en 1496; il fit ses études à Turin: en 1510 Jean Aimé de Bonnivard, son oncle, lui resigna le Prieuré de St. Victor, qui aboutissoit aux murs de Geneve, & qui formait un benefice considerable.

Ce grand homme (Bonnivard mérite ce titre par la force de son âme, la droiture de son cœur, la noblesse de ses intentions, la sagesse de ses conseils, le courage de ses démarches, l'étendue de ses connaissances & la vivacité de son esprit), ce grand homme, qui excitera l'admiration de tous ceux qu'une vertu héroïque peut encore émouvoir, inspirera encore la plus vive reconnaissance dans les cœurs des Genevois qui aiment Geneve. Bonnivard en fut toujours un des plus fermes appuis: pour assurer la liberté de nôtre République, il ne craignit pas de perdre souvent la sienne; il

oublia son repos ; il méprisa ses richesses ; il ne négligea rien pour affermir le bonheur d'une patrie qu'il honora de son choix : dès ce moment il la chérit comme le plus zélé de ses citoyens ; il la servit avec l'intrépidité d'un héros, et il écrivit son Histoire avec la naïveté d'un philosophe & la chaleur d'un patriote.

Il dit dans le commencement de son histoire de Geneve, que, *dès qu'il eut commencé de lire l'histoire des nations, il se sentit entraîné par son goût pour les Républiques, dont il épousa toujours les intérêts* : c'est ce goût pour la liberté qui lui fit sans doute adopter Geneve pour sa patrie.

Bonnivard, encore jeune, s'annonça hautement comme le défenseur de Geneve contre le Duc de Savoye et l'Evêque.

En 1519, Bonnivard devient le martyr de sa patrie : Le Duc de Savoye étant entré dans Geneve avec cinq cent hommes, Bonnivard craint le ressentiment du Duc ; il voulut se retirer à Fribourg pour en éviter les suites ; mais il fut trahi par deux hommes qui l'accompagnoient, & conduit par ordre du Prince à Grolée, où il resta prisonnier pendant deux ans. Bonnivard étoit malheureux dans ses voyages : comme ses malheurs n'avoient point ralenti son zèle pour Geneve, il étoit toujours un ennemi redoutable pour ceux qui la menaçoient, & par conséquent il devoit être exposé à leurs coups. Il fut rencontré en 1530 sur le Jura par des voleurs, qui le dépouillèrent, & qui le mirent encore entre les mains du Duc de Savoye : ce Prince le fit enfermer dans le Château de Chillon, où il resta sans être interrogé jusques en 1536 ;

il fut alors delivré par les Bernois, qui s'emparèrent du Pays de Vaud.

Bonnivard, en sortant de sa captivité, eut le plaisir de trouver Geneve libre & réformée ; la République s'empressa de lui témoigner sa reconnoissance et de le dedommager des maux qu'il avoit soufferts ; elle le reçut Bourgeois de la ville au mois de Juin 1536 ; elle lui donna la maison habitée autrefois par le Vicaire-General, et elle lui assigna une pension de 200 écus d'or tant qu'il sejourneroit à Geneve. Il fut admis dans le Conseil des Deux-Cent en 1537.

Bonnivard n'a pas fini d'être utile : après avoir travaillé à rendre Geneve libre, il réussit à la rendre tolérante. Bonnivard engagea le Conseil à accorder aux Ecclesiastiques & aux paysans un tems suffisant pour examiner les propositions qu'on leur faisoit ; il réussit par sa douceur : on prêche toujours le Christianisme avec succès quand on le prêche avec charité.

Bonnivard fut savant ; ses manuscrits, qui sont dans la Bibliothèque publique, prouvent qu'il avoit bien lu les auteurs classiques latins, & qu'il avoit approfondi la théologie & l'histoire. Ce grand homme aimoit les sciences, et il croyoit qu'elles pouvoient faire la gloire de Geneve ; aussi il ne negligea rien pour les fixer dans cette ville naissante ; en 1551 il donna sa bibliothèque au public ; elle fut le commencement de notre bibliothèque publique ; & ces livres sont en partie les rares & belles editions du quinzieme siecle qu'on voit dans notre collection. Enfin, pendant la même année,

ce bon patriote institua la Republique son héritière, à condition qu'elle employeroit ses biens à entretenir le college dont on projettoit la fondation.

Il paroît que Bonnivard mourut en 1570; mais on ne peut l'assurer, parcequ'il y a une lacune dans le Nécrologe depuis le mois de Juillet 1570 jusques en 1571.

Note 2, page 3, line 3.

In a single night.

Ludovico Sforza, and others.—The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis XVI. though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this change in *her's* was to be attributed.

Note 3, page 8, line 18.

From Chillon's snow-white battlement.

The Chateau de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the Heights of Melleirie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St. Gingo.

Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent; below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet (French measure); within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam

black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered: in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces—he was confined here several years.

It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Heloise, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death.

The chateau is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

Note 4, page 19, line 16.

And then there was a little isle.

Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees, (I think not above three,) and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

When the foregoing poem was composed I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. Some account of his life will be found in a note appended to the “Sonnet on Chillon,” with which I have been furnished by the kindness of a citi-

zen of that Republic which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom.

Note 5, page 23, line 2.

Leman! these names are worthy of thy shore.

Geneva, Ferney, Coppet, Lausanne.

Note 6, page 44, line 13.

Like to the Pontic monarch of old days.

Mithridates of Pontus.

O D E

T O

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

“ Expende Annibalem :—quot libras in duce summo
“ Invenies ?———

JUVENAL, Sat. X.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET,
BY W. BULMER AND CO. CLEVELAND-ROW,
ST. JAMES'S.

1814.

O. D. R.

NAPOLEON BONAAPARTE

THE FIFTH EDITION

LONDON

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET,
BY W. DUNN, 10, MARK LANE.

“ The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the
“ *Senate*, by the *Italians*, and by the Provincials of
“ *Gaul* ; his moral virtues, and military talents, were
“ loudly celebrated ; and those who derived any pri-
“ vate benefit from his government, announced in
“ prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity.

* * * * *

“ By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life
“ a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an
“ Emperor and an Exile, till —————

Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. 6, p. 220.

O D E

TO

NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

O. D. E.

18

NAVY OFFICE, WHITEHALL, LONDON.

O D E.

I.

'Tis done—but yesterday a King !

And arm'd with Kings to strive—

And now thou art a nameless thing

So abject—yet alive !

Is this the man of thousand thrones,

Who strew'd our Earth with hostile bones,

And can he thus survive ?

Since he, miscall'd the Morning Star,

Nor man nor fiend hath fall'n so far.

II.

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind
 Who bow'd so low the knee ?
 By gazing on thyself grown blind,
 Thou taught'st the rest to see.
 With might unquestion'd,—power to save—
 Thine only gift hath been the grave
 To those that worshipp'd thee ;
 Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
 Ambition's less than littleness !

III.

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
 To after-warriors more
 Than high Philosophy can preach,
 And vainly preached before.
 That spell upon the minds of men
 Breaks never to unite again,
 That led them to adore
 Those Pagod things of sabre-sway,
 With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

IV.

The triumph, and the vanity,
 The rapture of the strife *—
 The earthquake voice of Victory,
 To thee the breath of life ;
 The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
 Which man seem'd made but to obey,
 Wherewith renown was rife—
 All quell'd ! — Dark Spirit ! what must be
 The madness of thy memory !

V.

The Desolator desolate !
 The Victor overthrown !
 The Arbiter of others' fate
 A Suppliant for his own !
 Is it some yet imperial hope
 That with such change can calmly cope ?
 Or dread of death alone ?
 To die a prince — or live a slave —
 Thy choice is most ignobly brave !

* *Certaminis gaudia*, the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

VI.

He who of old would rend the oak,
 Dreamed not of the rebound ;
 Chained by the trunk he vainly broke —
 Alone — how looked he round ?
 Thou in the sternness of thy strength
 An equal deed hast done at length,
 And darker fate hast found :
 He fell, the forest-prowlers' prey ;
 But thou must eat thy heart away !

VII.

The Roman, when his burning heart
 Was slaked with blood of Rome,
 Threw down the dagger — dared depart,
 In savage grandeur, home. —
 He dared depart in utter scorn
 Of men that such a yoke had borne,
 Yet left him such a doom !
 His only glory was that hour
 Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

VIII.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway
 Had lost its quickening spell,
 Cast crowns for rosaries away,
 An empire for a cell ;
 A strict accountant of his beads,
 A subtle disputant on creeds,
 His dotage trifled well :
 Yet better had he neither known
 A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

IX.

But thou — from thy reluctant hand
 The thunderbolt is wrung—
 Too late thou leav'st the high command
 To which thy weakness clung ;
 All Evil Spirit as thou art,
 It is enough to grieve the heart,
 To see thine own unstrung ;
 To think that God's fair world hath been
 The footstool of a thing so mean ;

X.

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
 Who thus can hoard his own !
 And Monarchs bowed the trembling limb,
 And thanked him for a throne !
 Fair Freedom ! we may hold thee dear,
 When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
 In humblest guise have shown.
 Oh ! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
 A brighter name to lure mankind !

XI.

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
 Nor written thus in vain—
 Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
 Or deepen every stain—
 If thou hadst died as honour dies,
 Some new Napoleon might arise,
 To shame the world again—
 But who would soar the solar height,
 To set in such a starless night ?

XII

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
 Is vile as vulgar clay ;
 Thy scales, Mortality ! are just
 To all that pass away ;
 But yet methought the living great
 Some higher sparks should animate,
 To dazzle and dismay ;
 Nor deem'd Contempt could thus make mirth
 Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

XIII.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
 Thy still imperial bride ;
 How bears her breast the torturing hour ?
 Still clings she to thy side ?
 Must she too bend, must she too share
 Thy late repentance, long despair,
 Thou throneless Homicide ?
 If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,
 'Tis worth thy vanished diadem !

XIV.

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
 And gaze upon the sea ;
 That element may meet thy smile,
 It ne'er was ruled by thee !
 Or trace with thine all idle hand
 In loitering mood upon the sand
 That Earth is now as free !
 That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
 Transferred his bye-word to thy brow.

XV.

Thou Timour ! in his captive's cage
 What thoughts will there be thine,
 While brooding in thy prisoned rage ?
 But one—" The world *was* mine ;"
 Unless, like he of Babylon,
 All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
 Life will not long confine
 That spirit poured so widely forth—
 So long obeyed—so little worth !

XVI.

Or like the thief of fire from heaven,
 Wilt thou withstand the shock?
 And share with him, the unforgiven,
 His vulture and his rock!
 Foredoomed by God—by man accurst,
 And that last act, though not thy worst,
 The very Fiend's arch mock;*
 He in his fall preserv'd his pride,
 And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

*

“The fiend's arch mock.

“To lip a wanton, and suppose her chaste.”—

Shakspeare.

XVI.

Or like the thief of the storm driven

Will thou withstand the shock?

And share with him, the unforgiving

His vulture and his rock!

Foredoomed by God—by man accursed

And that last act, though not thy word

The very friend's rich mock;

He in his fall preserver of his pride

And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

"The friend's rich mock."

"To his a wanton, and suppose her cousin."

Shakespeare

And that last act, though not thy word

The very friend's rich mock;

He in his fall preserver of his pride

And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

coming and going yet never at home

Life will be good too for him

That of his life is so far from being

so long as it is—happy and good

HEBREW MELODIES.

BY LORD BYRON.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1815.

HEBREW MELODIES.

The following Poems were written in the year
1815, and are by LORD BYRON, Esq.
A Collection of Hebrew Melodies, and
other Poems, written in the year 1815,
by Lord Byron, Esq.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE-STREET.

1815.

The subsequent poems were written at the request of the author's friend, the Hon. D. Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged, by Mr. BRAHAM and Mr. NATHAN.

CONTENTS

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HEBREW MELODIES

HEBREW MELODIES.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY

HERREW MELODIES

HERREW MELODIES

THE WALKS IN BEAUTY

THE WALKS IN BEAUTY, like the night
Of blossoms shining and early time,
And all that's best of dawn and day,
Shine in her aspect and her eye,
That motion is to that tender light,
If that beauty is ready, they desire.

HEBREW MELODIES.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

I.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies ;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes :
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

II.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

III.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL
SWEPT.

I.

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallowed while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!
It softened men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's Lyre grew mightier than his throne!

II.

It told the triumphs of our King,
It wafted glory to our God ;
It made our gladdened vallies ring,
The cedars bow, the mountains nod ;
Its sound aspired to Heaven and there abode !
Since then, though heard on earth no more,
Devotion and her daughter Love
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
To sounds that seem as from above,
In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

I.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD, which lies beyond
Our own, surviving Love endears ;
If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
The eye the same, except in tears—
How welcome those untrodden spheres !
How sweet this very hour to die !
To soar from earth and find all fears
Lost in thy light—Eternity !

II.

It must be so : 'tis not for self
That we so tremble on the brink ;
And striving to o'erleap the gulph,
Yet cling to Being's severing link.

Oh ! in that future let us think
 To hold each heart the heart that shares,
 With them the immortal waters drink,
 And soul in soul grow deathless theirs !

THE WILD GAZELLE.

I.

THE WILD GAZELLE on Judah's hills

Exulting yet may bound,

And drink from all the living rills

That gush on holy ground ;

Its airy step and glorious eye

May glance in tameless transport by :—

II.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,

Hath Judah witness'd there ;

And o'er her scenes of lost delight

Inhabitants more fair.

The cedars wave on Lebanon,

But Judah's statelier maids are gone !

III.

More blest each palm that shades those plains
Than Israel's scattered race;
For, taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

IV.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

I.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the Godless dwell!

II.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

III.

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their Country—Israel but the grave!

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

I.

ON JORDAN'S BANKS the Arabs' camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—
Yet there—even there—Oh God! thy thunders sleep:

II.

There—where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone!
There—where thy shadow to thy people shone!
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself—none living see and not expire!

III.

Oh! in the lightning let thy glance appear!
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear:
How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod!
How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God!

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

I.

SINCE our Country, our God—Oh, my Sire!
Demand that thy Daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

II.

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!

III.

And of this, oh, my Father! be sure—
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

IV.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent !
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my Father and Country are free !

V.

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died !

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S
BLOOM.

I.

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

II.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

III.

Away; we know that tears are vain,

That death nor heeds nor hears distress:

Will this unteach us to complain?

Or make one mourner weep the less?

And thou—who tell'st me to forget,

Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

II.

MY SOUL IS DARK.

I.

MY SOUL IS DARK—Oh ! quickly string
 The harp I yet can brook to hear ;
 And let thy gentle fingers fling
 Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
 If in this heart a hope be dear,
 That sound shall charm it forth again ;
 If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
 'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain :

II.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
 Nor let thy notes of joy be first :
 I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
 Or else this heavy heart will burst ;

For it hath been by sorrow nurst,
And ach'd in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I.

I SAW THEE WEEP—the big bright tear
 Came o'er that eye of blue ;
 And then methought it did appear
 A violet dropping dew :
 I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
 Beside thee ceased to shine ;
 It could not match the living rays
 That fill'd that glance of thine.

II.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
 A deep and mellow dye,
 Which scarce the shade of coming eve
 Can banish from the sky,

Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

I.

THY DAYS ARE DONE, thy fame begun ;
 Thy country's strains record
 The triumphs of her chosen Son,
 The slaughters of his sword !
 The deeds he did, the fields he won,
 The freedom he restored !

II.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
 Thou shalt not taste of death !
 The generous blood that flowed from thee
 Disdain'd to sink beneath :
 Within our veins its currents be,
 Thy spirit on our breath !

III.

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word !

Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices poured !

To weep would do thy glory wrong ;
Thou shalt not be deplored.

IT IS THE HOUR.

IT IS THE HOUR when from the boughs
 The nightingale's high note is heard ;
 It is the hour when lovers' vows
 Seem sweet in every whispered word ;
 And gentle winds and waters near
 Make music to the lonely ear.
 Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
 And in the sky the stars are met ;
 And on the wave is deeper blue,
 And on the leaf a browner hue ;
 And in the Heaven that clear obscure,
 So softly dark, and darkly pure,
 That follows the decline of day
 As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST
BATTLE.

I.

WARRIORS and Chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path :
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

II.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet !
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

III.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
 Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
 Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
 Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!

SAUL.

I.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
"Samuel, raise thy buried head!
"King, behold the phantom seer!"
Earth yawn'd; he stood the centre of a cloud:
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;
His hand was withered, and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glittered there,
Shrunk and sinewless, and ghastly bare:
From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

II.

“ Why is my sleep disquieted ?

“ Who is he that calls the dead ?

“ Is it thou, Oh King ? Behold

“ Bloodless are these limbs, and cold :

“ Such are mine : and such shall be

“ Thine, to-morrow, when with me :

“ Ere the coming day is done,

“ Such shalt thou be, such thy son.

“ Fare thee well, but for a day ;

“ Then we mix our mouldering clay.

“ Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,

“ Pierced by shafts of many a bow ;

“ And the falchion by thy side,

“ To thy heart, thy hand shall guide :

“ Crownless, breathless, headless fall,

“ Son and sire, the house of Saul !”

**“ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE
PREACHER.”**

I.

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possess'd me;
My goblets blush'd from every vine,
And lovely forms caress'd me;

I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendour.

II.

I strive to number o'er what days
 Remembrance can discover,
 Which all that life or earth displays
 Would lure me to live over.

There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
 Of pleasure unembittered;
 And not a trapping deck'd my power
 That gall'd not while it glittered.

III.

The serpent of the field, by art
 And spells, is won from harming;
 But that which coils around the heart,
 Oh! who hath power of charming?

It will not list to wisdom's lore,
 Nor music's voice can lure it;
 But there it stings for evermore
 The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS
SUFFERING CLAY.

I.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY,
Ah, whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

II.

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recal:

Each fainter trace that memory holds
 So darkly of departed years,
 In one broad glance the soul beholds,
 And all, that was, at once appears.

III.

Before Creation peopled earth,
 Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
 And where the furthest heaven had birth,
 The spirit trace its rising track.
 And where the future mars or makes,
 Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
 While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
 Fix'd in its own eternity.

IV.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
 It lives all passionless and pure:
 An age shall fleet like earthly year;
 Its years as moments shall endure.

Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

I.

THE King was on his throne,
 The Satraps throng'd the hall;
 A thousand bright lamps shone
 O'er that high festival.
 A thousand cups of gold,
 In Judah deem'd divine—
 Jehovah's vessels hold
 The godless Heathen's wine!

II.

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

III.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
“ Let the men of lore appear,
“ The wisest of the earth,
“ And expound the words of fear,
“ Which mar our royal mirth.”

IV.

Chaldea's seers are good,
 But here they have no skill;
 And the unknown letters stood
 Untold and awful still.
 And Babel's men of age
 Are wise and deep in lore;
 But now they were not sage,
 They saw—but knew no more.

V.

A captive in the land,
 A stranger and a youth,
 He heard the king's command,
 He saw that writing's truth.
 The lamps around were bright,
 The prophecy in view;
 He read it on that night,—
 The morrow proved it true.

VI.

“ Belshazzar’s grave is made,
“ His kingdom pass’d away,
“ He in the balance weighed,
“ Is light and worthless clay.
“ The shroud, his robe of state,
“ His canopy, the stone;
“ The Mede is at his gate!
“ The Persian on his throne!”

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS !

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS ! melancholy star !
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
 That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
 How like art thou to joy remembered well !
 So gleams the past, the light of other days,
 Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays ;
 A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
 Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold !

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU
DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

I.

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT
TO BE,

I need not have wandered from far Galilee ;
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race.

II.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee !
If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free !
If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

III.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
 As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know ;
 In his hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine
 The land and the life which for him I resign.

III.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

I.

Oh, Mariamne ! now for thee

The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding ;

Revenge is lost in agony,

And wild remorse to rage succeeding.

Oh, Mariamne ! where art thou ?

Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading :

Ah, could'st thou—thou would'st pardon now,

Though heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

II.

And is she dead?—and did they dare
 Obey my phrensy's jealous raving?
 My wrath but doom'd my own despair:
 The sword that smote her 's o'er me waving.—
 But thou art cold, my murdered love!
 And this dark heart is vainly craving
 For her who soars alone above,
 And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

III.

She's gone, who shared my diadem;
 She sunk, with her my joys entombing;
 I swept that flower from Judah's stem
 Whose leaves for me alone were blooming.
 And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
 This bosom's desolation dooming;
 And I have earn'd those tortures well,
 Which unconsumed are still consuming!

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF
JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

I.

FROM the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, Oh SION! when rendered to Rome :
'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

II.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come ;
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fettered hands that made vengeance in vain.

III.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed ;
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

IV.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away ;
Oh ! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head !

V.

But the Gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign ;
And scattered and scorn'd as thy people may be,
Our worship, oh Father ! is only for thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT
DOWN AND WEPT.

I.

WE sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scattered all weeping away.

II.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be withered for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

III.

On the willow that harp is suspended,
 Oh Salem ! its sound should be free ;
 And the hour when thy glories were ended
 But left me that token of thee :
 And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
 With the voice of the spoiler by me !

THE DESTRUCTION OF SEMNACHERIB.**I.**

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold ;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen :
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

III.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

IV.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

VI.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal ;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

II.

"Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom's watchful light!"

FROM JOB.

I.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of Immortality unveil'd—
Deep sleep came down on ev'ry eye save mine
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

II.

“ Is man more just than God ? Is man more pure
Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure ?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust !
The moth survives you, and are ye more just ?
Things of a day ! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom’s wasted light ! ”

ON THE DEATH

SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And Triumph weeps above the brave.

For them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue :
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hushed, *their name* the only sound ;
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot ?
Who would not die the death they chose ?

And, gallant Parker ! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be ;
And early valour, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
In woe, that glory cannot quell;
And shuddering hear of victory,
Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
When cease to hear thy cherished name?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They cannot choose but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be
Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

THE END.

But there are breasts that bleed with love
In woe that gives more joy than life;
And shuddering heart of victory
Where one so dear to God lies dead.

What shall they then so much desire
When none to love is left alive?
They cannot love for love is dead;
While God's full heart is full of love.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They cannot choose but weep the night;
Deep for the dead the cry must be
When never more canst thou be seen.

And so it is, and so it shall be
When all the world is dead and gone;
And so it is, and so it shall be
When all the world is dead and gone.

POEMS
ON HIS
DOMESTIC
CIRCUMSTANCES.

I. FARE THEE WELL!
II. A SKETCH FROM PRIVATE LIFE.

BY LORD BYRON.

WITH THE
STAR OF THE LEGION OF HONOUR,
AND FOUR OTHER POEMS.

Third Edition.

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1816.

POEMS

OF THE

D O M B 3 1 0

CIRCUMSTANCES

AND THE

STATE OF THE

REPUBLIC

OF THE

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

WITH THE

STATE OF THE

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OF THE

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OF AMERICA

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OF THE

UNITED STATES

1810

POEMS.

FARE THEE WELL!

FARE thee well ! and if for ever—
Still for ever, fare *thee well*—
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.—

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er can'st know again :

Would that breast by thee glanc'd over,
Every inmost thought could show !
Then, thou would's't at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so—

FARE THEE WELL!

Though the world for this commend thee—

Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe—

Though my many faults defaced me,

Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet—oh, yet—thyself deceive not—

Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not,
Hearts can thus be torn away;

Still thine own its life retaineth—

Still must mine—though bleeding—beat,
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.—

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead :
Both shall live—but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.—

And when thou would'st solace gather—
When our child's first accents flow—
Wilt thou teach her to say—"Father
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee—
When her lip to thine is prest—
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee—
Think of him thy love had bless'd.

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see—
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.—

FARE THEE WELL!

All my faults—perchance thou knowest—

All my madness—none can know;

All my hopes—where'er thou goest—

Whither—yet with *thee* they go—

Every feeling hath been shaken,

Pride—which not a world could bow—

Bows to thee—by thee forsaken

Even my soul forsakes me now.—

But 'tis done—all words are idle—

Words from me are vainer still;

But the thoughts we cannot bridle

Force their way without the will.—

Fare thee well!—thus disunited—

Torn from every nearer tie—

Seared in heart—and lone—and blighted—

More than this I scarce can die.—

A

SKETCH FROM PRIVATE LIFE.

“ Honest—Honest Iago!

“ If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.”

SHAKSPEARE.

Born in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
Next—for some gracious service unexpressed,
And from its wages only to be guess'd—
Rais'd from the toilet to the table,—where
Her wondering betters wait behind her chair.
With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie—
The genial confidante, and general spy—

Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess—
 An only infant's earliest governess!
 She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
 That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.
 An adept next in penmanship she grows,
 As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
 What she had made the pupil of her art,
 None know—but that high Soul secured the heart,
 And panted for the truth it could not hear,
 With longing breast and undeluded ear.

Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
 Which Flattery fool'd not—Baseness could not blind,
 Deceit infect not—near Contagion soil—
 Indulgence weaken—nor Example spoil—
 Nor master'd Science tempt her to look down
 On humbler talents with a pitying frown—
 Nor Genius swell—nor Beauty render vain—
 Nor Envy ruffle to retaliate pain—
 Nor Fortune change—Pride raise—nor Passion bow,
 Nor Virtue teach austerity—till now.

Serenely purest of her sex that live,
 But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive ;
 Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
 She deems that all could be like her below :
 Foe to all Vice, yet hardly Virtue's friend,
 For Virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme :—now laid aside too long,
 The baleful burthen of this honest song—
 Though all her former functions are no more,
 She rules the circle which she served before.
 If mothers—none know why—before her quake ;
 If daughters dread her for the mother's sake ;
 If early habits—those false links, which bind
 At times the loftiest to the meanest mind—
 Have given her power too deeply to instil
 The angry essence of her deadly will ;
 If, like a snake, she steal within your walls,
 Till the black slime betray her as she crawls ;
 If, like a viper, to the heart she wind,
 And leave the venom there she did not find ;

What marvel that this hag of hatred works
Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
And reign the Hecate of domestic hells?

Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints
With all the kind mendacity of hints,
While mingling truth with falsehood—sneers with
smiles—

A thread of candour with a web of wiles;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd schem-
ing;

A lip of lies—a face formed to conceal;
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel:
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown;
A cheek of parchment—and an eye of stone.
Mark, how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,
Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale—

(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colours in that soul or face)—
Look on her features ! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined :
Look on the picture ! deem it not o'ercharged—
There is no trait which might not be enlarged ;—
Yet true to “ Nature’s journeymen,” who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade,—
This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh ! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—
The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now ;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crush’d affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight !
And make thee in thy leprosy of mind
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind !

Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black—as thy will for others would create :
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed,—
The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread !
Then, when thou fain would'st weary Heaven with
 prayer,
Look on thine earthly victims—and despair !
Down to the dust !—and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear—
Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorred compeers—
And festering in the infamy of years.

MARCH 30, 1816.

ODE.

Oh, shame to thee, Land of the Gaul!
Oh, shame to thy children and thee!
Unwise in thy glory, and base in thy fall,
How wretched thy portion shall be!
Derision shall strike thee forlorn,
A mockery that never shall die;
The curses of Hate, and the hisses of Scorn
Shall burthen the winds of thy sky;
And, proud o'er thy ruin, for ever be hurl'd
The laughter of Triumph, the jeers of the World!

Oh, where is thy spirit of yore,
The spirit that breathed in thy dead,
When gallantry's star was the beacon before,
And honour the passion that led?
Thy storms have awaken'd their sleep,
They groan from the place of their rest,
And wrathfully murmur, and sullenly weep,
To see the foul stain on thy breast;
For where is the glory they left thee in trust?
'Tis scatter'd in darkness, 'tis trampled in dust!

Go, look through the kingdoms of earth,
From Indus, all round to the Pole,
And something of goodness, of honour, and worth,
Shall brighten the sins of the soul:
But thou art *alone* in thy shame,
The world cannot liken thee there;
Abhorrence and vice have disfigur'd thy name
Beyond the low reach of compare;
Stupendous in guilt, thou shalt lend us through time
A proverb, a bye-word, for treach'ry and crime!

While conquest illumin'd his sword,
While yet in his prowess he stood,
Thy praises still follow'd the steps of thy Lord,
And welcom'd the torrent of blood ;
Tho' tyranny sat on his crown,
And wither'd the nations afar,
Yet bright in thy view was that Despot's renown,
Till Fortune deserted his car ;
Then, back from the Chieftain thou slunkest away—
The foremost to insult, the first to betray!

Forgot were the feats he had done,
The toils he had borne in thy cause ;
Thou turned'st to worship a new rising sun,
And waft other songs of applause ;
But the storm was beginning to lour,
Adversity clouded his beam ;
And honour and faith were the brag of an hour,
And loyalty's self but a dream :—
To him thou hadst banish'd thy vows were restor'd ;
And the first that had scoff'd, were the first that
ador'd !

What tumult thus burthens the air,
What throng thus encircles his throne?
'Tis the shout of delight, 'tis the millions that swear
His sceptre shall rule them alone.
Reverses shall brighten their zeal,
Misfortune shall hallow his name,
And the world that pursues him shall mournfully feel
How quenchless the spirit and flame
That Frenchmen will breathe, when their hearts
are on fire,
For the Hero they love, and the Chief they admire !

Their hero has rushed to the field;
His laurels are cover'd with shade—
But where is the spirit that never should yield,
The loyalty never to fade !
In a moment desertion and guile
Abandon'd him up to the foe ;
The dastards that flourish'd and grew at his smile,
Forsook and renounced him in woe ;
And the millions that swore they would perish to save,
Beheld him a fugitive, captive, and slave !

The Savage all wild in his glen
Is nobler and better than thou ;
Thou standest a wonder, a marvel to men,
Such perfidy blackens thy brow !
If thou wert the place of my birth,
At once from thy arms would I sever ;
I'd fly to the uttermost ends of the earth,
And quit thee for ever and ever ;
And thinking of thee in my long after-years,
Should but kindle my blushes and waken my tears.

Oh, shame to thee, Land of the Gaul !
Oh, shame to thy children and thee !
Unwise in thy glory and base in thy fall,
How wretched thy portion shall be !
Derision shall strike thee forlorn,
A mockery that never shall die ;
The curses of Hate and the hisses of Scorn
Shall burthen the winds of thy sky ;
And proud o'er thy ruin for ever be hurl'd
The laughter of Triumph, the jeers of the World !

FAREWELL TO FRANCE.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my glory
 Arose and o'ershadowed the earth with her name ;—
 She abandons me now,—but the page of her story,
 The brightest or blackest, is filled with my fame.
 I have warred with a world which vanquished me only
 When the meteor of Conquest allured me too far,—
 I have coped with the Nations which dread me thus lonely,
 The last single Captive to millions in war !

Farewell to thee, France—when thy diadem crown'd me,
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,—
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
Decay'd in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.

Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were won,—
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
Had still soared with eyes fixed on Victory's Sun!

Farewell to thee, France—but when Liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then—
The Violet grows in the depth of thy valleys,
Though withered, thy tears will unfold it again—
Yet, yet I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—
There are links which must break in the chain that has
bound us,
Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

FAREWELL TO FRANCE

MADAME LAVALETTE.

LET Edinburgh Critics o'erwhelm with their praises

Their Madame de STAEL, and their fam'd L'EPINASSE ;
Like a meteor at best, proud Philosophy blazes,

And the fame of a Wit is as brittle as glass :
But cheering's the beam, and unfading the splendour
Of thy torch, Wedded Love ! and it never has yet
Shone with lustre more holy, more pure, or more tender,
Than it sheds on the name of the fair LAVALETTE.

'Then fill high the wine-cup, e'en Virtue shall bless it,
And hallow the goblet which foams to her name;
The warm lip of Beauty shall piously press it,
And HYMEN shall honour the pledge to her fame:
To the health of the Woman, who freedom and life too
Has risk'd for her Husband, we'll pay the just debt;
And hail with applauses the Heroine and Wife too,
The constant, the noble, the fair LAVALETTE.
Her foes have awarded, in impotent malice,
To their captive a doom, which all Europe abhors,
And turns from the Stairs of the Priest-haunted palace,
While those who replaced them there, blush for their
cause:
But, in ages to come, when the blood-tarnish'd glory
Of Dukes, and of Marshals, in darkness hath set,
Hearts shall throb, eyes shall glisten, at reading the story
Of the fond self-devotion of fair LAVALETTE.

WATERLOO.

~~~~~

The French have their *Poems* and *Odes* on the famous Battle of Waterloo as well as ourselves.—Nay, they seem to glory in the battle, as the source of great events to come. We have received the following poetical version of a Poem, the original of which is circulating in Paris—and which is ascribed, we know not with what justice, to the muse of M. De Chateaubriand. If so, it may be inferred that, in the Poet's eye, a new change is at hand—and he wishes to prove his secret indulgence of old principles, by reference to this effusion.

MORNING CHRONICLE.

## FRENCH ODE.

SAID TO BE DONE INTO ENGLISH VERSE BY R. S\*\*\*\*\*, P. L. P. R.  
MASTER OF THE ROYAL SPANISH INQN. &c. &c. &c.

—

We do not curse thee, Waterloo!

Though freedom's blood thy plain bedew;

There 'twas shed, but is not sunk---

Rising from each gory trunk---

Like the water-spout from ocean,

With a strong and growing motion---

It soars, and mingles in the air,

With that of lost LABEDOYERE---



With that of him whose honour'd grave  
Contains the "bravest of the brave;"  
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,  
But shall return to whence it rose;  
When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder---  
Never yet was heard such thunder  
As then shall shake the world with wonder---  
Never yet was seen such lightning  
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,  
Vanquishers of Waterloo!  
When the soldier—citizen,  
Swayed not o'er his fellow men---  
Save in deeds that led them on  
Where glory smil'd on Freedom's son---  
Who of all the despots banded,  
With that youthful chief competed?  
Who could boast o'er France defeated  
Till lone tyranny commanded?  
Till, goaded by ambition's sting,  
The Hero sunk into the King?



Then he fell---so perish all,

Who would men by man enthrall!

And thou too of the snow-white plume!

Whose realm refus'd thee even a tomb;\*

Better had'st thou still been leading

France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,

Than sold thyself to death and shame

For a meanly royal name;

Such as he of Naples wears,

Who thy blood-bought title bears.——

Little did'st thou deem when dashing

On thy war-horse through the ranks,

Like a stream which bursts its banks,

While helmets cleft and sabres clashing,

Shone and shivered fast around thee---

Of the fate at last which found thee!

Was that haughty plume laid low

By a slave's dishonest blow?

Once it onward bore the brave,

Like foam upon the highest wave.---

\* Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt.



There, where death's brief pang was quickest,  
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,  
Strewed beneath the advancing banner

Of the Eagle's burning crest---

(There with thunder clouds to fan her,

Who could then her wing arrest---

Victory beaming from her breast?)

While the broken line enlarging

Fell or fled along the plain;

There be sure was MURAT charging!

There he ne'er shall charge again!

O'er glories gone, the invaders march,

Weeps Triumph o'er each levelled arch

But let Freedom rejoice,

With her heart in her voice;

But her hand on her sword,

Doubly shall she be adored.

France hath twice too well been taught

The "moral lesson" dearly bought---

Her safety sits not on a throne,

With CAPET or NAPOLEON;

But in equal rights and laws,

Hearts and hands in one great cause---



Freedom, such as God hath given  
Unto all beneath his heaven,  
With their breath, and from their birth,  
Though guilt would sweep it from the earth;  
With a fierce and lavish hand,  
Scattering nations' wealth like sand;  
Pouring nations' blood like water,  
In imperial seas of slaughter!  
But the heart, and the mind,  
And the voice of mankind  
Shall arise in communion---  
And who shall resist that proud union?  
The time is past when swords subdued---  
Man may die---the soul's renewed:  
Even in this low world of care,  
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir,  
Millions breathe, but to inherit  
Her unconquerable spirit---  
When once more her hosts assemble  
Let the tyrants only tremble;---  
Smile they at this idle threat?  
Crimson tears will follow yet.



ON THE STAR  
OF  
" THE LEGION OF HONOUR."

---

1.

STAR of the brave !—whose beam hath shed  
Such glory o'er the quick and dead—  
Thou radiant and adored deceit !  
Which millions rushed in arms to greet,—  
Wild meteor of immortal birth !  
Why rise in Heaven to set on Earth ?

2.

Souls of slain heroes formed thy rays ;  
Eternity flashed through thy blaze ;  
The music of thy martial sphere  
Was fame on high, and honour here ;  
And thy light broke on human eyes,  
Like a Volcano of the skies.



## 3.

Like lava rolled thy stream of blood,  
And swept down empires with its flood;  
Earth rocked beneath thee to her base,  
As thou did'st lighten through all space;  
And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,  
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

## 4.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,  
A rainbow of the loveliest hue,  
Of three bright colours,\* each divine,  
And fit for that celestial sign;  
For Freedom's hand had blended them,  
Like tints in an immortal gem.

## 5.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;  
One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes;  
One, the pure Spirit's veil of white  
Had robed in radiance of its light:  
The three so mingled did beseeem  
The texture of a heavenly dream.

\* The tri-colour.



## 6.

Star of the brave ! thy ray is pale,  
And darkness must again prevail !  
But, Oh, thou Rainbow of the free !  
Our tears and blood must flow for thee.  
When thy bright promise fades away,  
Our life is but a load of clay.

## 7.

And Freedom hallows with her tread  
The silent cities of the dead ;  
For beautiful in death are they  
Who proudly fall in her array ;  
And soon, Oh Goddess ! may we be  
For evermore with them or thee !

THE END.

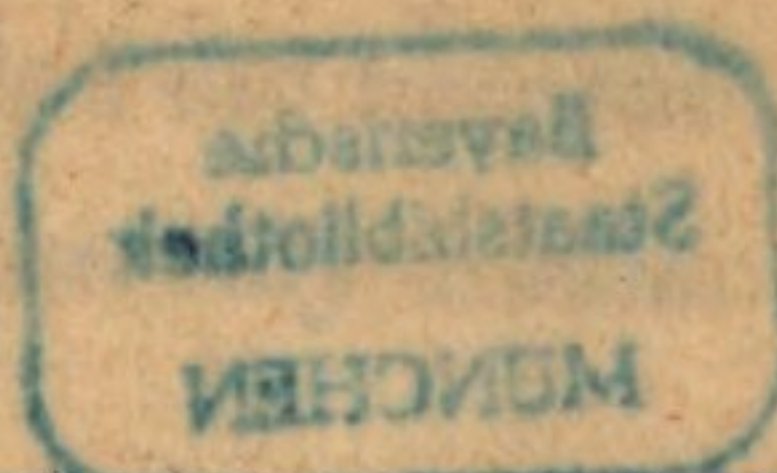
Bayerische  
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MUNCHEN



NOTE.

*The first two Poems were last produced.—The other  
five follow in the order wherein they were written.*

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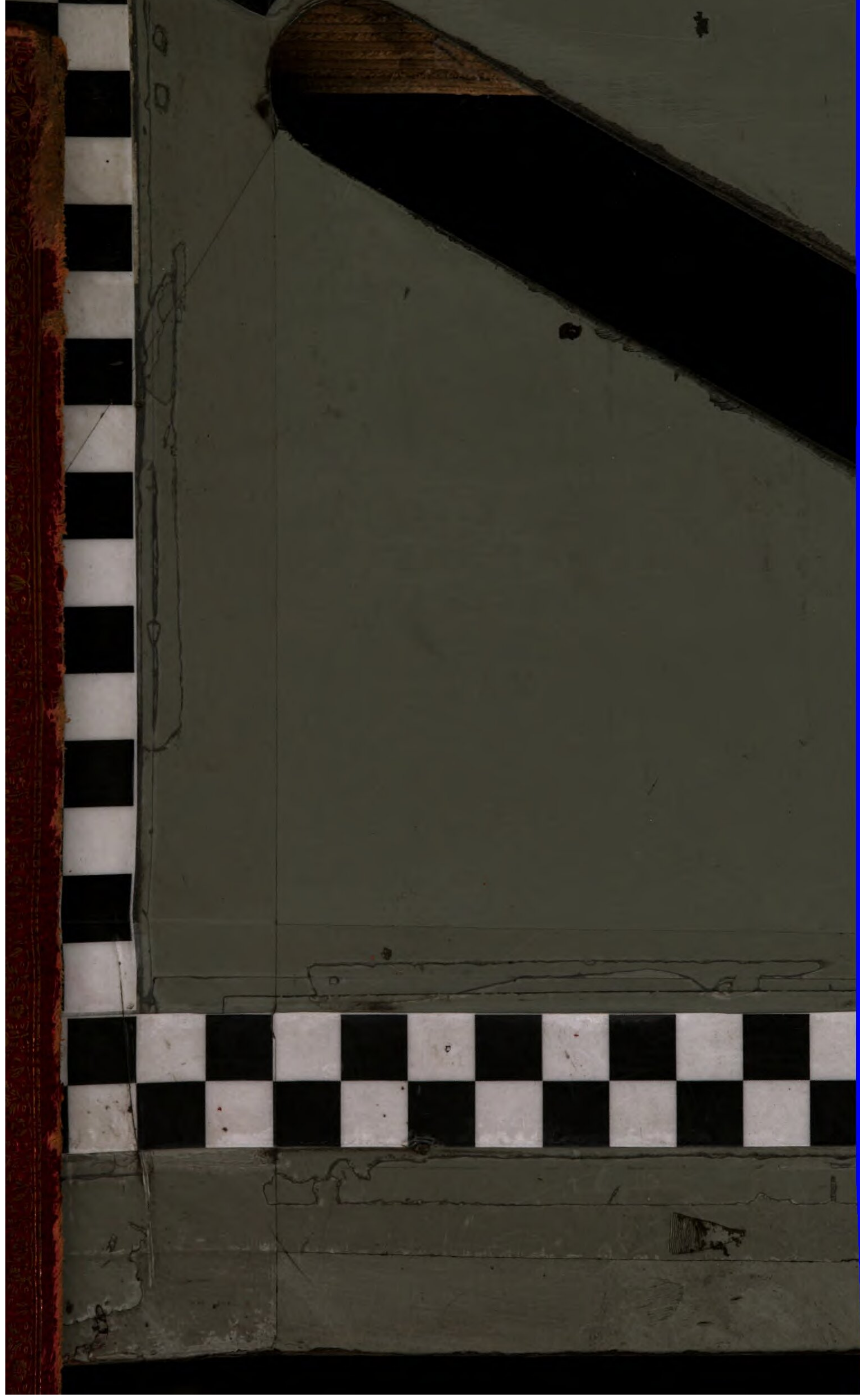


























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